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CALVINISM IMPROVED;

OR,

THE GOSPEL ILLUSTRATED

AS A SYSTEM

OF REAL GRACE,

ISSUING IN THE

SALVATION

OF

ALL MEN:

A Posthumous Work of the late Reverend
JOSEPH HUNTINGTON, D. D.
Minister of the First Church in Coventry, (Connecticut.)

"WHO WILL HAVE ALL MEN TO BE SAVED, AND TO COME UNTO THE KNOWLEDGE OF THE TRUTH. FOR THERE IS ONE GOD, AND ONE MEDIATOR BETWEEN GOD AND MAN, THE MAN CHRIST JESUS, WHO GAVE HIMSELF A RANSOM FOR ALL, TO BE TESTIFIED IN DUE TIME." APOSTLE *PAUL*.

PRINTED AT NEW-LONDON, *(CONNECTICUT.)*
BY SAMUEL GREEN.
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Entered as the act directs.

INTRODUCTION.

THE AUTHOR, TO ALL HIS FELLOW-SINNERS, PARTAKERS IN COMMON WITH HIM IN GUILT AND WOE.

OUR great and common Parent hath been pleaſed to give us a place among his rational, and immortal creatures, and made us capable of great and everlaſting happineſs or miſery. Which of theſe ſhall be our lot to all eternity, depends on his good, holy, and ſovereign will alone. Not many of us are ordinarily much attentive to either, except in regard to the preſent life and world; yet were we wiſe, our main concern and attention would be converſant with our intereſt in a future ſtate, and we ſhould make the preſent life wholly ſubſervient to that intereſt.

But however inattentive moſt are to theſe things, there are in the world, and always have been, many individuals ſcattered here and there,

whose minds have been deeply impressed with a sense of eternal things. They of this description and no other, will pay much attention to what I here offer.

The author has often been too precipitate and hasty in many things; but in no wise so in embracing the doctrine here advanced. He is now passing the meridian of life; and this opinion of the way of salvation is the result of his most careful enquiry from the days of his early youth.

His first idea of the way of salvation, was this, viz. That by the grace of God, and by a diligent use of means, he must obtain some *valuable distinction* between himself and other sinners. That when God saw *this*, his heart would be moved thereby, to give him regenerating and converting grace, and then would be holden thereby in a way of *mere grace*, by gospel constitution, to confer eternal salvation.

Upon this plan he labored much in early life, but the result was not as he expected; it ended in total despair. For, the more he labored for a good hope in this way, the more he was convinced of his awful destitution of all such distinctions and qualifications. He was then led to take refuge, and found great relief in that grace, which he saw to be absolutely sovereign, flowing out of the very nature of God, through Christ; not moved by any distinctions or previous qualifications in sinners; but from

the nature of God, wholly ſelf-moved, according to the free electing love of God. A view of which might bring a joyful ſenſe of ſalvation to the moſt vicious, ſtupid, hardened ſinner, as well as to himſelf. Yet ſtill he had no idea of any ſalvation beyond the more common, and *much limited* idea of God's election and ſalvation.

Being much diſpoſed to a ſtudious life, and always delighting greatly in books, he ſpent much of his time in reading and enquiry, in the early periods of life. Amidſt all the vanities and follies of youth, yet acquainting his heart with wiſdom, even while he too much laid hold on folly. Being alſo much favored, by a kind Providence, with regard to the beſt means of inſtruction, and a pious example from his parents in his early days, and afterwards with a more public education; the diſpoſition of his heart inclined him, in great preference to all other employments, to the ſtudy of divinity, and to become a preacher of the goſpel.

He was now in thoſe principles which we call *Calviniſtic;* and met with ſome acceptance in his public performances, and ſoon took the paſtoral charge of a kind and reſpectable people, from whom he has ever ſince received as many kindneſſes as moſt of his brethren in the miniſtry have. Living in a ſeries of harmony and love, excepting only with reſpect to a very few individuals, at one time and another, who yet have given him no great trouble.

He, for ſeveral years, underſtood the way of ſalvation taught in the word of God, (which he always regarded as the only deciſive rule of faith and life,) agreeably, in all eſſential matters, to the explanations of Mr. *Calvin*, Dr. *Owen*, Mr. *Willard*, Preſident *Edwards*, and the great body of puritan divines ſince the reformation from popery. Not as yet thinking of any extent of the divine decrees, or God's eternal purpoſes of love to a loſt world, beyond the common orthodoxy of his country; or what, for want of a more ſignificant word, he would call *the limitarian plan*. By degrees, he began to be preſſed more and more in his own mind, with regard to the full conſiſtency of it.

He preached, as did other divines, the atonement of Chriſt, a full and complete ſacrifice for the redemption of every ſinner in the world; and the divine law wholly ſatisfied in the obedience of Chriſt unto death; that every ſinner on earth, was alike invited, and moſt ſolemnly commanded to believe on Chriſt to the ſaving of his ſoul; that it was the greateſt of all ſin and rebellion againſt God, not to believe unto ſalvation, and alike ſo, in every ſinner that heard the goſpel; and, that ſaving faith did not *create*, or in the leaſt *change* the object or foundation of it, but was wholly grounded on an object and foundation forever immutable.

Theſe doctrines he urged, from the nature and attributes of God; the covenant of redemption; and the dying love of Chriſt, as diſplayed

in the book of divine revelation. And, on the ſame principles, always enforced holineſs and virtue, as a native and genuine conſequence of a cordial belief of them; and alſo as being moſt reaſonable and happifying in the very nature of things. Meanwhile often denouncing the dreadful wrath of God, revealed from heaven againſt all ungodlineſs, and unrighteouſneſs of men. His preaching was of this tenor, with all the uſes of it, and inferences that might be drawn from it; on the idea of a *limited* decree, and a *limited* ſcheme of redemption and ſalvation.

The author holds all theſe doctrines *of grace* and *of duty*, more firmly now, if poſſible, than ever before; except only with regard to the *limitation* of the covenant of redemption, as not according to the eternal purpoſe of God.

What has lain on his mind with increaſing preſſure is this. When he had exhibited to his audience the infinite fulneſs and all-ſufficiency of Chriſt to ſave ſinners, both by price and by power; and the great duty of every ſinner to believe it to the ſalvation of his ſoul, then to tell them; "*Many ſinners, many alas! are left out of the* "*covenant of redemption; many for whom Chriſt* "*never died.* A part only are comprehended, a "very few in compariſon, as we have reaſon "to believe, or at leaſt to fear. How many we "cannot ſay, nor who they are. God will cer- "tainly make ſuch as are elected, to believe, "by his own almighty power and grace; and "he will moſt certainly leave all the reſt to

" eternal damnation as their ſins juſtly deſerve : " for they were never comprehended in the de- " cree of God or the covenant of redemption and " ſalvation." I have been more and more preſſed and perplexed in my own mind, with regard to the conſiſtency of this manner of preaching with itſelf, or with the word of God. I have often taken up the objections that have been brought againſt it, and have attempted to remove them in the common way, and done it to as general ſatisfaction, perhaps, as other preachers.

The arguments uſed to ſilence theſe objections are ſo trite and familiar with every one, that I need only hint at them now. I have told my audience that we all juſtly deſerve to be eternally miſerable ; that God was not obliged to ſave any ; that he is a juſt, abſolute ſovereign : the reprobate, or non-elect have no cauſe to impeach God of any injuſtice ; they ſhall receive only the due reward of their deeds ; that they may believe if they will ; that it is the wickedneſs of their hearts, their wills, and diſpoſitions that hinders them ; the heart at enmity with God ; and that this is ſo far from being their reaſonable excuſe, that it is their juſt, and moſt awful condemnation ; that they have no buſineſs with God's ſecret, eternal decree, or the extent of the covenant of redemption, and the number given to Chriſt therein, and for whom alone he died ; that they muſt attend only to what God has revealed ; that he will have all men to be ſaved ; that he taketh no pleaſure in the death of him that dieth,

but that he would turn and live; that he plainly commandeth all men every where to repent, and believe to the saving of their souls; that the secret decree of God can have no influence on their wills, and ought to have none on their conduct. So I have gone through with all the common arguments as other ministers of the gospel have so often done. These the reader has all by heart, if he has paid any tolerable attention to the common preaching of calviniſtic divines.

My audience have generally almoſt to a man set down satisfied. Yet, at evening, much perplexity hath invaded my own mind; thoughts have thus returned upon me. I have this day told my audience, making no difference, and without the exception of a single person, that if we do not believe that God hath given to us eternal life in his Son, we make him a liar; and quoted the evangeliſt John in support of it. I have told them, that they have, every one alike, all the warrant, that the God of truth can give them, to believe to eternal life; and that it is the greateſt of all sin not thus to believe. I have told them that their acting this faith on the Son of God, can lay no foundation at all, but is wholly built on an eternal foundation already laid, the immutable truth of God in his Son. I have told them they muſt so believe; they have right to, they ought to do it; and then every one of them shall be

saved. When upon the *limitarian* plan, I know not that one tenth part of them, or even one of them was ever included in the covenant of redemption, or given to Christ, or that he ever died for one soul of them.

Ought I not to have known for whom among them Christ did indeed die, before I gave out this doctrine; and then to have addressed the same to them only? or ought I not, at least, to have spoken hypothetically and said; *if you are of the number of the elect*, you have full warrant and ground to believe to salvation. Otherwise there is no foundation laid in Christ for your faith; but, on the contrary, you will make God a liar in so believing, as you will believe what he knows is not true, viz. that every soul that hears the gospel has a foundation for his saving faith, laid in Christ?

I have told my audience that the number given to Christ, and for whom he died, is a secret that belongs to God only, and not at all to them. And, that it is their great duty to make their calling and election sure. I have quieted their minds, but not my own. For I cannot avoid many thoughts which have never occurred to their minds, on the *limitarian* plan. I cannot help seeing, that although, *on this plan*, the number and the names are a secret with God alone; yet the principles are what I have been preaching. I have asserted them as revealed in the word of God, I have proclaimed them aloud, as the will of God; and now how, alas! shall I reconcile them in harmonious truth?

I can very willingly let alone the *number* and the *names ; that* fits eaſy on my mind. But what ſhall I do with the principles I have advanced, as things revealed and belonging to every ſinner in the world ? How can I, on theſe principles, theſe revealed doctrines, invite and command every ſinner to believe to ſalvation, and, in the name of Chriſt too, tell every one, without exception, that Chriſt has laid a foundation for this univerſal faith and ſalvation ; when I believe he did, in his death, lay a foundation only for a part ; that only a part are given to him, and that " other foundation can no man lay than that which is laid, which is Jeſus Chriſt ?" Many ſimilar thoughts have unavoidably preſſed into my mind, after I have been preaching the goſpel in the limitarian line.

The learned reader will readily recollect the way that ſeveral learned and pious divines have taken to free themſelves from this perplexity. They aſſert, that all ſinners are commanded to believe that which has *no truth* in it, antecedent to their believing it ; and that in the devout and obedient exerciſe of their minds in believing, *that* is turned into a glorious, ſaving truth, which had no truth in it when their minds firſt began to work upon it. This they ſay is a moſt *inconceivable, aſtoniſhing myſtery*. I think ſo too, and can get no relief to my own mind in that way. If I could believe without previous truth, and make truth by believing, I ſhould believe myſelf into the enjoyment of many agreeable things, temporal as well as ſpiritual : Yet even men of no

leſs worth than, Meſſrs. *Boſton*, *Marſhall*, *Hervey*, and others I might name, have taken that refuge; and merely, no doubt, becauſe they could not poſſibly reconcile the *limitarian* doctrines of ſalvation in any other way.

Theſe embarraſſments in my mind, have induced me to look, moſt attentively, into all opinions that have ever been found among all ſects that embrace divine revelation; and eſpecially the *neonomian* and the *arminian* tenets. But, on the moſt thorough inveſtigation, I find theſe inconſiſtent with divine revelation, and the neceſſary attributes of God; alſo with the relation of man to his Maker; and with his entire, abſolute, and everlaſting dependence on God. Still, the evidences, and even demonſtrations of the truth, and divinity of the ſacred oracles are ſo clear, that I can never renounce my firm faith in them. I alſo find, in reading all books of divinity that ever I ſaw, that the main, leading ſentiments in them, will moſt inevitably infer the ſame extenſive doctrine of grace and ſalvation that is here advanced: were all juſt and neceſſary conſequences drawn from thoſe foundation principles which all unite in. But, few juſt conſequences have been drawn, and many things ſaid by *limitarians*, of all denominations, in full and plain oppoſition to the foundation principles which they hold.

After all reſearches, I have recurred to the word of God alone. There I find a moſt glorious, and aſtoniſhing ſyſtem, and exibitions of divine wiſdom, power and love; moſt harmoniouſly conſiſtent with itſelf, and with all the divine attri-

butes, with pure reaſon, and with God's conduct in the univerſe; and in a moſt bleſſed way, accommodated and adapted to guilty, miſerable man, in all the depth of his *entire impotency* and guilt: A complete Savior undertaking to deliver him alike from both; and that in ſuch a merciful and glorious extent, that I can in the name of Chriſt, command every human creature, under heaven, to believe in ſuch a Savior, and promiſe him, on the ſame authority, he ſhall be ſaved by him.

I can now preach the goſpel to *every creature*; i. e. I can tell every human creature under heaven, *Good news to* HIM. I can tell every creature of a Savior as complete to *give him* the *qualification*, as to make the *atonement*; to give repentance as well as forgiveneſs of ſins, alike engaging and enſuring both, by covenant with his Father. A bleſſed Savior, that hath made his ſalvation ſure, before loſt ſinners ever thought any thing about it; and that did all the work alone without their doing any thing. That, by the power of his own ſpirit, he ſetteth ſinners to work out their own ſalvation with fear and trembling: not at all to make it more ſure, than he has made it in the covenant of redemption, and the atonement; but only, to communicate the knowledge, and comfort of it to them, and to apply the benefit, by working in them a moral capacity to enjoy it.

Hence I can bid them, in the name of Chriſt, to work out their own ſalvation with

fear and trembling: for it is God that worketh in them both to will and to do, of his own good pleasure. I can tell them that the grace of God, alone, brings salvation to their sight and trust; and that this, in a way of *native consequence*, teaches them to deny ungodliness and every worldly lust, and to live soberly, righteously, and godly in this present world. Because this is God's way, and the only fit way in which God brings them to the final, heavenly inheritance, and makes them meet to be partakers of it. Also, because it is most reasonable, and an exceeding great pleasure and delight to them while on the way: And as in all respects it is most agreeable to the natures God has given them; to their moral agency; and to the honor of his own name, to bring them to the enjoyment of all the sure benefits of redeeming love and grace in such a way.

On this ground, I can assure them that God hath given to us *fallen men* eternal life, and this life is in his Son; and he that believeth not this record, *whosoever he be*, hath made God a liar. So I can charge any unbeliever with the greatest blame, for not believing *immediately* to the saving of his soul, i. e. to a sense and enjoyment of gospel salvation. And I can pronounce every unbelieving sinner damned, i. e. most justly and awfully condemned while in unbelief. But on the limitarian plan, I can charge no sinner with any thing amiss, for not believing to his own salvation; unless I first know, that he is one

that is comprehended in their partial and much limited covenant of redemption; or one of the few, or the party, be it more or leſs, for whoſe eternal ſalvation Chriſt died.

The more I have thought on theſe things, the more I am convinced of the utter inconſiſtency of the general preaching of proteſtant divines, on any other ground than this. *Chriſt died alike for all. And all mankind are alike included in the moſt glorious and merciful covenant of redemption.*

I ſuppoſe, at the ſame time, that it is not *expedient* that goſpel preachers ſhould *dwell* much on this point, viz. proving that God will indeed bring all the fallen race, in his own time, out of their blindneſs, guilt, and miſery, to the knowledge and enjoyment of ſalvation; or that Chriſt will in his own way and time, draw all men unto him, in the plaineſt ſenſe of the words. But rather to dwell much, and mainly, on the nature and character of God, and that of fallen man, and the way of ſalvation for ſuch a miſerable race; with all the duties, and obligations, hopes, and expectations reſulting from theſe thoughts.

The great things we want to know, are what God is; and what we are; and how we may pleaſe God; and in what way we may be ſaved. Merely to know how many, or how few, ſhall be brought to glory is no part of our ſaving knowledge. But to know the way to

heaven, by saving experience, is the great thing we all need. This is just the same in my view of salvation; as on that of the protestant world in general, ever since the reformation from popery. Nor should I think it expedient to publish the following sheets, at least at this time, were it not that I find I cannot vindicate divine revelation on any other plan. I likewise find many inquisitive minds, deeply concerned about things of eternal consequence, pressed with the same embarrassment.

I am well aware, that such an open *advancing* step to pour light into the minds of men; though it is no other, in the nature of it, than what has been many times done, may, as in former times, in all probability, be an occasion of great alarms in the minds of many pious, good people. Among the rest, (which is to me most disagreeable in prospect) several of my dearest and most valuable friends and connections will probably be more wounded by this publication, or at least more aggrieved, than any other persons on my account.

But there is a wonderful force in important truth, pressed home on the human mind with full conviction. When HE who ruleth the spirits of all men, is determined to make it appear to the world, he always makes the truth press so hard on the human mind as to find vent. Witness the case of *Elihu*, *Jeremiah*, *Paul*, and many others. Job, 32. Jer. 20. Acts, 18. The most of those, whom God has made instruments

to give additional light and guidance to his church and to the world, have felt much reluctance on the part of human nature and worldly conſiderations, from the days of *Moſes* to the preſent day. But almighty God always finds an effectual way to draw out of their ſouls, whatever he is pleaſed to pour in with ſpecial deſign for the benefit of mankind. It is doubtleſs by connection and acquaintance with the people of God, that the gentiles, in every part of the world, got this idea of their prophets, ſybils, and augurs, in all ages. The celebrated Roman poet, as the learned will recollect, paints this thought moſt beautifully in the caſe of his propheteſs, in the ſixth book of his Æneid. And I apprehend, we may well maintain the doctrine of ſuch a forcible energy on the mind, in theſe caſes, without giving any countenance to enthuſiaſm, in the more common acceptation of the word.

What now appears, is a ſmall part of a SYSTEM of DIVINITY, which the author has been meditating more than *twenty years*. A critical view of the religion of the covenant people of God, in every age, and in every part of the world, where divine revelation has been embraced; and alſo of the mythology of all the nations of the earth that have not been favored with the ſacred oracles, fell naturally in the way of his contemplations, as he was proceeding on a very extenſive ſcale. What he un-

dertook was with no other view, than for his own improvement; as he has ever found the uſe of the pen of very ſpecial ſervice to his own mind.

Innumerable criticiſms on the original languages in which the ſacred oracles were firſt written, are left out in this publication. Becauſe our Engliſh bible is ſo well done, in the laſt tranſlation, that there is not one verſe, or ſentence in it, that will miſguide any common, Engliſh reader, in any material thought. And becauſe, on the contrary, the author did, and does ſtill ſuppoſe, that ſuch a number of criticiſms, as he found his own thoughts naturally led into, would, if inſerted, much bewilder the minds of moſt of his readers. And laſtly, this would much ſwell the volume, and embarraſs any printer in this country, for want of proper types, and practice.

The following TREATISE is not divided into chapters and ſections according to the more common way in later times; but is on the plan of the more ancient compoſitions. Moreover, the reader will find in many places, that a particular thought, or argument, is taken up and purſued as far as the preſent connection required; then laid aſide for the preſent, and reſumed again, in another connection, and enlarged upon in ſeparate parts of the volume, with diſtinct views, and in various connections. This is no more repetitious, than if each thought, or argument had been wholly finiſhed in one place by it-

ſelf. This method, was choſen becauſe the author's deſire was to help the reader, as much as poſſible, to carry along in his mind to the end of the whole, every material idea, without the loſs of any.

The author is quite beyond a doubt, in his own mind, with regard to the ſolid truth of his leading principles and arguments ; though he ſuppoſes that inaccuracies may be diſcerned by the more critical part of his readers. With reſpect to the *due time* of advancing this ſtep forward, and ſo explicitly pouring in this additional light, he is not ſo poſitive.

There are, however, ſeveral conſiderations that have weight in my mind, to make the publication without further delay ; ſuch as theſe. I have ſpent more than *twenty years* in the moſt careful reading and attention to every thing relating to this ſubject ; and, I think, with a ſingle eye, and ardent deſire to know the truth, and to avoid all falſe reaſoning, and every groundleſs concluſion. *I have no intereſt but in the truth.* I am in the ſame predicament, with regard to the *due time* of publication, that all men ſince the days of inſpiration have been. Any author may misjudge, after his greateſt poſſible exerciſe of judgment in the matter. Some have done it, as the great and learned *Huſs*, who was one century before the *due time*, in attempting to pour in a flood of light upon the world. He offered nothing to the public but what

was advanced in the next century by *Luther*, *Calvin*, and others with glorious ſucceſs. I conſider that if all ſtudents will refrain publication, in advancement of light and knowledge, until they are quite certain the moſt proper time is come; every thing of this kind muſt be at an end. Alſo that when God's own time is come, for new acquiſitions of knowledge, even then, it is his wiſe and holy pleaſure, that truth ſhould beat its way through very conſiderable oppoſition, and that the leaders in it ſhould meet with little thanks, and no comfortable reward, from the world in general.

Beſides all this, I regard the marvellous hand of divine providence, ſince my own day of obſervation, as leading into new acquiſitions of every kind more rapidly than in any former period of time. A ſpirit of *enquiry*, of *light* and *liberty*, does wonderfully increaſe. And it hath been my ſteadfaſt opinion, with the venerable Edwards and others, who, as I apprehend, have written beſt on the prophecies, relating to the latter day glory, that the glorious millennium is now dawning, and hath been ever ſince the reformation from popery; and that when ſix thouſand years from the creation of the world are compleated, the ſun will fairly ariſe, even the ſun of righteouſneſs in all his divine glory. That time now draws near. The ſecond or third generation from us may, ſome of them, behold that bleſſed day.

I am further fully perſuaded, that the glorious and univerſal revival, and power of true religion in that day, will not be brought on ſo much by the awful thunderings of divine wrath, and threatnings of hell and damnation, as by leading the blind fearful minds and guilty ſouls of men to ſee and know the true character of God, and the Savior. When the world ſhall know the living and true God and Jeſus Chriſt whom he hath ſent; then a ſenſe and enjoyment of life eternal will abound, and the cords of love will effectually draw dead ſinners to holineſs and virtue.

The reader may naturally expect that I ſhould take notice of ſeveral writers of late, and ſome former writers, on the ſubject of the *univerſal redemption* and *final ſalvation* of the human kind; both in ſupport of the ſentiment, and in oppoſition thereto. I ſuppoſe I have read them all, from the great *Auguſtine* (who advanced the foundation arguments in ſupport of this doctrine, with greater ſtrength of mind, than any have done ſince) down to the preſent day. Several learned men have written on the ſubject, in Europe and America; ſome on one ſide of the queſtion and ſome on the other. I have purpoſely omitted any particular remarks on either: principally becauſe it appears to me, that none of them ever ſufficiently attended to the ſubject to write with full pertinency upon it. Though, at the ſame time, the author re-

gards them as much greater and better men than himſelf, and would think himſelf honored to ſet at their feet, to receive inſtruction in any matters they have *fully* attended to.

THE LEADING THOUGHTS, on which the following TREATISE is built, may be divided into the following particulars. *The attributes of God. His own fixed eternal purpoſes. His covenant of redemption with the Son of his love. The full and proper contraſt between the firſt, and ſecond fœderal head of mankind. The doctrine of a true and proper imputation of guilt and righteouſneſs. The co-extenſive offices of Chriſt, as prophet, prieſt, and king. The juſt deſert of ſin. The voice of God's holy law, and that of the goſpel, ſounding throughout the whole of divine revelation. The law wholly ſatisfied in Chriſt. The* GOSPEL *announcing theſe* GLAD TIDINGS. *The nature and office of regeneration, ſaving faith, and repentance unto life. The indiſpenſible neceſſity of internal holineſs. The awful damnation of all while unregenerate. The only way, in which God will ſave ſinners, and the infinite reaſonableneſs of it. The great power of a real acquaintance with the ſalvation of God, to move the heart to all holineſs and virtue; and to regulate the whole life. The abſolute, and everlaſting dependance of all the human race on him that made them. And the everlaſting glory that will redound to God alone, Father, Son, and Holy Ghoſt, in this great ſalvation.*

The above are the principal, leading thoughts,

illuſtrated by a variety of arguments; which are indeed but a very ſmall part of all thoſe that might have been adduced, with equal force, from the nature of God and from his word.

The author has one requeſt to make to all that may ſee, or hear of this book. He aſks that none would either *approve* or *cenſure* it, until after a careful reading. And that all, who may have read it with attention, and then ſpeak freely their own opinion concerning it, as every one in that caſe has good right to do, would alſo communicate this humble requeſt from the author, to all ſuch as have knowledge of it only by report. This is a juſt claim, which every man has on his fellow-men; and which every humane, candid mind will readily grant. The author is the more emboldened to make it, as he never could endure to violate the ſame principle himſelf, with regard to any writings he has ever ſeen or heard of. Having intimated theſe things as introductory, the reader is now led to a direct and immediate conſideration of the ſubject.

A

TREATISE

ON

UNIVERSAL SALVATION.

THE ſacred ſcriptures, or the two teſtaments, are certainly the very dictates of God to men, on the moſt intereſting matters. God hath ſpoken as became himſelf to ſpeak, things moſt important to the human kind; and things in the moſt perfect conſiſtency, through the whole of divine revelation. The great deſign of it is, that the divine Being and character may be manifeſted, in the cleareſt poſſible manner, for the diſplay of his own glory; and mankind guided thereby to the true end of their exiſtence, even the knowledge and enjoyment of God the ſupreme and conſummate good. The duty and happineſs of man are inſeparably united in the ſacred oracles.

IT is of the utmoſt importance to the

comfort of man, to have his mind open, and unbiaſſed with regard to the truth, heartily engaged to find the very truth, and embrace it with ſupreme love, for its own ſake. This is "a good and honeſt heart." This is "receiving truth in the love of it." Alas; how hard an attainment for man in his preſent ſtate!

Now any man that can read the word of God with open candor, will ſee, that there are two capital points of inſtruction running through the whole of it, as things to be believed; and that every where virtue, or holineſs of heart and life is enjoined upon us, as matter of practice, enforced with the ſtrongeſt reaſons and motives.

The two great doctrines we are taught to believe, are, *Firſt*, What it is juſt and right for God to do with us, conſidered in our own perſonal character, and deſert. This I ſhall call the pure voice of juſtice to man, without regard to an atonement, or a mediator. *Secondly*, What God will *in fact* do with mankind, as united to a mediator, and one with him by divine conſtitution, in a federal ſenſe: Or how, in very deed, God hath promiſed to deal with man, in that union with the ſecond Adam: What his condition ſhall certainly be, in this life, and the life to come. This I call pure goſpel; or tidings from God, which never could have been known but by his own revelation.

It will alſo appear that theſe two capital points are, throughout the whole bible, kept

in conſtant view, running *ſide by ſide*, in open fight, from the beginning to the cloſe of the ſacred oracles. Theſe points are very different from each other, yea directly oppoſite, except only as harmonizing in Chriſt, which is the moſt wonderful myſtery of the goſpel, and the grand diſtinguiſhing doctrine of divine revelation.

Take a few inſtances of this direct oppoſition of ſentiment, if literally underſtood, in an immediate and direct import, without any regard to a mediator, an atonement, or a fœderal conſtitution.—"In the day thou eateſt thereof thou ſhalt ſurely die." "And all the days that Adam lived were nine hundred and thirty years." "Every man ſhall die for his own ſins." "Chriſt died for our ſins according to the ſcriptures." "God will by no means clear the guilty." "I, even I am he that blotteth out your ſins, for mine own ſake." The reader that is well acquainted with the book of divine revelation, will think of thouſands of plain aſſertions, as much to the purpoſe as theſe; and every fair reaſoner will own that words and ideas cannot be ſet in more full oppoſition, if taken in one and the ſame, plain, immediate, literal ſenſe. Yet we find not the leaſt difficulty in reconciling all theſe with each other, and with the truth, when we bring them into one proper analogy: We eaſily ſee one harmonious, perfectly conſiſtent ſcheme, running through the whole.

But, it will abundantly appear in the ſequel, that we muſt keep our ear open to

the voice of pure juſtice to man, as he deſerves out of Chriſt; alſo to the voice announcing what ſhall in very deed, through infinite grace, take place with reſpect to man in Chriſt: Or it will be wholly in vain for all the wit, and art in the world, to make any thing better of the holy ſcriptures, than a long, ſolemn, ſeries of the moſt palpable contradictions. I have, with the utmoſt caution, and deepeſt attention, long conſulted the ſacred oracles; and, perhaps, all of eſſential conſequence, that has been written on them, ſince the chriſtian æra, in various languages; and I freely confeſs that, without the clue, juſt named, I muſt ſet down in deiſm: But, with it, the whole book of God, *how true! how beautiful! how glorious!*

The whole word of God, centers in Chriſt, and is ſealed in his blood; the law, and goſpel, otherwiſe oppoſite, are brought into perfect union; righteouſneſs and peace embrace each other; and this diſplay ſhines, in perpetual and glorious ſymmetry, through the old and new teſtaments.

But now, to reſume the capital argument already alluded to.

We begin with the firſt threatening ever denounced againſt man, on condition of his rebellion, Gen. ii. "In the day that thou eateſt thereof, thou ſhalt ſurely die." I believe the more common conſtruction of this commination, by proteſtant divines, is right, viz. that total death, temporal and ſpiritual, was to take place on all human nature, on that very day; and eternal death

then begin, and be confirmed and made ſure to all human nature, without the leaſt intimation of remedy or relief, to endleſs duration. I fully believe this conſtruction is juſt, and abundantly ſupported in the holy ſcriptures.

However, as I am acquainted with many learned, and ingenious criticiſms on the words, needleſs here to remark upon, I will take a conſtruction in which all agree as far as it extends; and which will anſwer what I am now aiming at, as well as that which is more agreeable to my own mind. It is certainly true, as far as it goes; though I ſuppoſe it does not contain the whole truth. "In the day thou eateſt thereof, thou ſhalt ſurely die." Let the ſenſe be allowed as in the paraphraſe: viz. "In the day thou eateſt of the forbidden fruit, thou ſhalt become mortal, even thou Adam, and all human nature now in thee. Thy ſoul alſo, ſhall ſuſtain great damage and unhappineſs, that is, ſpiritual death, in ſome awful degree, without the leaſt ground of hope that the caſe ſhall ever become any better with thee, (with the human kind,) to endleſs duration. Be aſſured of no felicity for thee; nothing better than ſorrow and woe; or, at the utmoſt, no greater relief than extinction of being." I grant this explanation of the words, at preſent, for two reaſons; the one is, it is certainly true as far as it extends; though it by no means comprehends the whole: And the other is, becauſe all that regard the word of God, will ac-

quiesce in it thus far, while most will carry it much further. It will plainly appear, that whether this, or the more common idea be taken from the words, it will have one and the same aspect, in support of the following argument: Inasmuch as there can be nothing plainer than that the threatening never did fully take place, on *mere man* in his own person, and never will; and that God never designed it as the *voice of certain fact*, on mere man; but as the voice of pure justice alone.

I HOPE, that I cannot be misunderstood in the use of these phrases, "*the voice of justice*," and "*the voice of fact*;" or, "*language of law*, and *language of gospel*," with respect to man: Or, "*what ought in justice to be done, and what, in God's sovereign mercy, harmonizing with justice, shall be done.*" I can think of no terms more accurate, and I find the distinction frequent among civilians and divines, viz. "*De jure, and de facto*," which distinction has been found necessary in many cases; and is, as will appear throughout the whole of this essay, quite essential to a right understanding of divine revelation, or even maintaining it with any possible consistency.

Now if any will say, that the threatening did take place on the day of the rebellion, *in full*, according to the plain sense in which God made Adam to understand him, when he uttered the words; or agreeable to pure justice in the law alone, or ever will take place, on mere mankind personally, or just

as Adam expected; their minds are, at present, not in a condition to be reasoned with. God had a most glorious and merciful reserve in his own mind, on the preconcerted plan of eternal, redeeming wisdom and love, which he did not communicate to man when he placed him under his holy law; and which he did begin to intimate "in the cool of the day," at the very time when Adam expected the full threatening would have taken place. There was no other possible way for God to have suspended the immediate execution of it, consistent with his own most holy nature and character. He had provided a way, in which all he had said, might and certainly would be verified on man in a *vicar*, a *substitute*, a *second Adam*, or covenant head, in *due time* to be dignified by personal union with the eternal LOGOS, or WORD. That, on him, the whole weight of the curse should fall, vindicating the truth of Deity in threatening, though never executed on mere man as Adam expected, and as the plain *voice of justice* denounced; which Adam then thought was inseparable from the *voice of fact*; having not the least intimation, when he was placed under the holy law, that there could ever be any separation of *pure justice*, from *very fact*, with regard to man: Nor would any man, or any angel ever have thought of such a distinction; or any possible way to make it, consistent with the immutable truth of God, if God himself had not contrived and revealed it. Here

we have the two grand pillars of divine revelation. God displayed in an *absolute character*, without any intimation of a mediator; this is moral law and all-glorious. And God displayed to man in a mediator; this is gospel, *pure gospel*, and exceedeth in glory.

In a right understanding of these grand points, we are led into a harmonious, and consistent view of the whole word of God. We find the law and the gospel displayed side by side, through the whole. The law every where sounds with awful terror in accents of pure justice, towards man, without a Savior. The gospel is all mere news, and good news, glad tidings, through a mediator, which man would never have heard or thought of, if God had not made the proclamation. The moral law every where speaks to man in his own personal character; the gospel in that of the Messiah. The law tells what man in justice deserves, in his own personal character; the gospel, what the Son of man, the Son of God deserves, and that he is by divine constitution "a covenant for the people, and God's salvation to the ends of the earth;" and that the head of *every man* is Christ. This intimation began on the day of the rebellion, and at that time was but dark, and for wise reasons, which will appear in the sequel.

The divine law enjoining perfect obedience, on pain of endless misery, runs through the whole of divine revelation from beginning to end; and so does the gospel,

exhibiting a ſalvation fully tantamount. There is as much of the goſpel in the old teſtament as in the new; and as much of the law in the new teſtament as in the old. The latter diſpenſation hath the whole ſubſtance of the former, and nothing for the *matter* of it new: The former hath, in like manner, the whole of the latter, and nothing for ſubſtance has ever been done away, or ever will be, until the myſtery of God ſhall be finiſhed. The new teſtament is only a new edition of the old, in much greater clearneſs.

Four things are obvious in the grand deſign of divine revelation, viz. To manifeſt, and hold clearly in our view the abſolute and rectoral character of God. The character of fallen man. His duty. And God's eternal, fixed and gracious purpoſe concerning him, through the whole of his interminable exiſtence. The three former of theſe pertain to the law of God; the laſt to the goſpel; and is all pure goſpel, or good news.

In the law we ſee God's all-glorious, and infinitely perfect character as law giver; as alſo the infinitely hateful, and moſt abominable *moral character* of fallen man; and the reaſonable duty of man to be wholly conformed to the moral image of God, and keep his whole law, without any deficiency; and what he deſerves, and what the voice of juſtice is concerning him, if he is found wanting in the leaſt. "Curſed is every one

that continueth not in *all things* written in the book of the law to do them," is the invariable ſentence of the law every where.

Now this manifeſtation of God, and of man's duty, and his guilt, runs through the whole bible, old and new teſtament; juſt as much in the one as in the other; but much more conſpicuous, for the *manner of diſcovery*, in the latter.

On the other hand, the goſpel begins in the third chapter of divine revelation, (as the law does in the ſecond,) and runs through all the old teſtament, in types, figures, prophecies, &c. The goſpel is all *mere news*, and *good news*; and it tells what man never would have thought of, if he had not been told it; nor believed, when told of it, had it not come with ſufficient authority. The goſpel is *pure tidings**; and more, it is *good tidings*.† Whatever is law, in any part of ſacred writ, is founded on the nature and character of God, adapted to man's nature, and his relation to God. Whatever is goſpel, in any part of the bible, is founded wholly on Jeſus Chriſt, his character and offices, and adapted to the condition of man, *in all his guilt and miſery*, and in all his deſperate impotency.

It has pleaſed infinite wiſdom, always to make out his promiſes to mankind in a covenant way, or under a fœderal head, or repreſentative.

Thus it was in the firſt man, and thus in

* Ἀγγελία. † Εὐαγγέλιον.

his contrafted anti-type Jeſus Chriſt, as is moſt evident from Rom. chap. 5, and many other parts of ſacred ſcripture. Thus it was in Noah, Gen. chap. 9, and with Abraham, Gen. 17. And with David as a type of Chriſt, Pſal. 89. Never, ſince the fall, can any individual take hold of any promiſe of ſpiritual good, but in a fœderal way; and certainly the grand curſe including in it virtually all other curſes, came in this way: As the reader will ſee to full demonſtation in its proper place.

It has been obſerved before, that God keeps up the language of juſtice towards man in his awful guilt. He keeps the voice of ſtrict juſtice ſounding in his ears, through the whole book of divine revelation, and that, no doubt, that man may know and feel what he is, and have an heart to receive the voice of grace, *as grace;* or feeling himſelf infinitely vile, may bid a becoming welcome to mere, ſovereign mercy. The law ſpeaks in righteouſneſs; every where denounces what is *juſt* and *equal* towards man. It thunders aloud the true deſert of man. But it ſpeaks not what ſhall *in fact* take place on man, and his ſurety both; or *on man at all*, in faith and union with Chriſt; or any otherwiſe than in his ſurety; any more than the original curſe did, in the garden of Eden, which was noticed before. Yet it is manifeſt, that the wiſdom of God ſaw fit, for a time, to leave man in ſuch ignorance and darkneſs of mind, that he ſhould miſtake that which was ſpoken only as the

voice of juſtice, for a declaration of *very fact*, which ſhould inevitably come upon himſelf. Man moſt naturally fell into this miſunderſtanding, from the inward ſenſe of horrible guilt, in his own ſoul, and ſo was exerciſed with great torment, in a way of ſervile fear. Great ſenſe of guilt will make an object of fear which hath no other exiſtence ; " the wicked fear where no fear is."

It is not for man to account for all the reaſons of the divine conduct, though it is well for us, with humble adoration, to go as far in this way as we can. It is a certain fact, however, that God hath choſen to give light and comfort to miſerable, blind ſinners of mankind, by ſlow degrees.

There was ſome light, ſome comfort, derived to our firſt parents from what they heard God ſay to the ſerpent, relative to the oppoſite ſeed, and the victory announced. The law, and the goſpel were both promulgated in paradiſe. The voice of law then ſounded much the loudeſt ; but it has been the manifeſt will of heaven, that the ſound of the goſpel ſhould gradually gain upon that of the law, from that day to the finiſhing of the myſtery of God.

By the inſtitution and import of ſacrifices in paradiſe, and cloathing the naked, ſhameful, pair in their ſkins ; and by the ſacrifices continued down to the flood ; and by the preaching of Enoch and Noah ; and by oral inſtructions, &c. the light and comfort of divine grace had ſome gradual increaſe, while the law, as we know, ſtill

founded very terrible. See the epiſtle of Jude.

By the type of the ark; the ſalvation of the church therein; the covenant made with all mankind in Noah; and by the rainbow as a token ſealing the whole, the good report was conſiderably louder and clearer than ever before.

In the covenant made with Abraham, the light of the goſpel increaſed. For all, of this nature, was *very goſpel* from the firſt; *in nature* the ſame with that preached after the deſcent of the Holy Ghoſt at pentecoſt, only much more obſcure, in *manner* and *degree*. God's promiſe of a ſon to that patriarch, to be given in ſuch a wonderful way; and of the *church*, a *numerous ſeed*, through him; the promiſe of the land of Canaan, &c. all gave further inſtruction, with regard to that moſt intereſting concern of man, the redemption and ſalvation of the guilty ſoul.

At the giving of the law on mount Sinai, and the inſtitution of all the rites and ſacrifices of the moſaic œconomy, both law and goſpel were made much plainer than before: the moral law, or ten commandments, to enlighten and awaken God's people, teach them their duty, convince them of their awful deficiency, the juſtice of their condemnation, and their utter impotency and abſolute dependance on God: And the ceremonial law, all the rituals, ſacrifices, types and ſhadows, pointing to Chriſt, the great anti-type, "the end of the law for righteouſ-

neſs, to every one that believeth." This exhibited the goſpel, or doctrine of atonement and free grace, with increaſing perſpicuity; and is well called "a ſchool-maſter to bring us to Chriſt."

From this time down to the fulneſs of time, in which Chriſt came, God ſent among his people a great number of prophets, every one of whom caſt ſome light on the law, and gave ſome further knowledge of the goſpel. Among theſe, David, Iſaiah, and Daniel, were very eminent. The light of divine revelation, both law and goſpel, was much augmented, by John the harbinger of Chriſt. The Meſſiah in his own perſon, doctrines, deeds, and ſufferings, made the whole will of God, relating to a guilty world, the methods of his grace, and all the purpoſes of his love, ſtill far more conſpicuous; ſo clearly expreſſive, that "his name is well called *the word of God.*"

The light of the ſame goſpel which had been, by degrees, exhibited from the days of paradiſe, was much increaſed in the apoſtolic times, by the more abundant effuſion of the holy ſpirit; by the preaching of the apoſtles, far and wide; by their writings, filling up the ſacred canon. So that the leaſt teacher under this *new diſpenſation*, was better inſtructed than the greateſt under the *old;* and underſtood the doctrines of the kingdom of heaven, better than John the promiſed Elias. Matt. xi.

And, when the goſpel door was ſet open to *all nations* of the earth, as well as to the

Jews, the doctrine was so strange, so far beyond all the notions of grace and salvation, ever entertained among the covenant people of God; and so exceedingly mortifying to the pride of their hearts, that it was abhorred and rejected. Just as it now would be, should one assert in the most obvious and plainest sense, that "God will have all men to be saved, and to come unto the knowledge of the truth:" Or, as if a modern believer should assert without any construction of his own, and with all the simplicity of an old patriarch, that Christ died, "not for our sins only, but also for the sins of the WHOLE WORLD." Indeed, when Jesus first gave this intimation, they who had just been gazing at him with pleasing wonder, were so chagrined at the idea that a whole world of *heathen dogs* should be set on a footing, as respectable as themselves, that they wished him nothing better than instant death. Luke iv. They could not bear the thought of losing their fancied monopoly, on which they so much valued themselves.

THE motive, why the Jews were more malicious persecutors of Christ, and the primitive christians, than other men, was quite natural to all mankind. It was not because they were worse than other men, or more malicious by nature; but they had been so long honored of God, and distinguished by peculiar *privileges*, that they felt *them* in their hearts as a monopoly: Even as a man descended from an ancient, noble family, has no idea that it is fit, in the

courſe of providence, that the children of beggars immemorial, ſhould ever become as rich and noble as himſelf and his poſterity. This is human nature in every age. Any doctrine, that will place poor, ſhameful creatures, who have in time paſt been moſt neglected of God, in the holy, ſovereign diſpenſation of his providence, on a level with us, with regard to grace and favor yet to come; and would break down all barriers which incloſe us in the palaces of diſtinction and honor, will ſet on our hearts, juſt as *like* doctrines did on the hearts of the favored children of Abraham, in days of yore.

It has pleaſed infinite wiſdom, however, to cauſe the light of ſalvation to increaſe, down to the preſent day; though not in every age, or every period of time alike. There have been remarkable æras, in which ſomething like a flood of light has poured into the world, and, at certain times, darkneſs and ignorance have rather gained ground. But, on an average, light hath been growing, in all ſciences; and the light of the goſpel, the light of ſalvation in particular.

I have already obſerved remarkable periods and diſpenſations, down to the cloſe of the ſacred canon. After that, there was a gradual increaſe of knowledge for about three hundred years. Then, for a time, the darkneſs in general, ſeemed to gain upon the light; and ſometimes groſs darkneſs ſeemed as if it would overſpread the world. Yet God kept up, in his church, ſome lumi-

naries at all times. There never paſſed one century, without ſome great, godly, learned man, who, perhaps advanced ſomewhat further than his fathers; witneſs the Waldenſes, and Albigenſes, in the darkeſt period; alſo, *Huſs*, *Luther*, *Calvin*, &c. And, ſince the days of theſe eminent luminaries, there has been an unremitting advancement of knowledge. I believe I may ſay, not one year has elapſed without ſome increaſe of goſpel light, as well as of every other ſcience. "Many ſhall run to and fro, and knowledge ſhall be increaſed."

The laſt, and preſent centuries have been productive of many great and learned inquirers after truth, who have been happily ſucceſsful. At the head of them we may place, in Europe, the incomparable *Owen*, and, in America, the immortal *Edwards*; men of the ſame turn of mind, and much the ſame channel of thinking. Theſe men graſped the whole circle of ſcience in a remarkable manner. And, by the way, every careful reader will ſee, that they held all the foundation principles of ſalvation, on which this *treatiſe* is ſupported, juſt as I do; though they drew not the ſame conſequences, however fully and fairly implied: And like all others, that have advanced forward and beat the way, they met with vaſt oppoſition. For the moral world is like the natural; he that breaks up new ground, meets with great reſiſtance from the hard bound, ſtubborn ſoil; after a few years cultivation, the plough runs eaſy.

I MAY now further conſider the law, and the goſpel. They were firſt promulgated, as I have ſaid, very near together, in the garden of Eden, and they run through all the ſacred oracles, *ſide by ſide*. God keeps them both, every where, in full view; yet they are as diſtinct in their natures as any two things in the univerſe.

WHATEVER is law, whereſoever found in ſacred ſcripture, is a rule of abſolute perfection, as high as the natures of moral agents can riſe, in heart and conduct; on ſuppoſition they are wholly without any moral diſorder, any want of perfect holineſs, in the temper of their minds. This law every where denounces the infinite and everlaſting wrath of God, and endleſs miſery to man, in caſe of the leaſt failure. The law knows nothing of mercy, or of mitigation. This is law, and it is "holy, juſt, and good."

THE goſpel, on whatever page of ſacred writ it is found, either in the old teſtament or new; whether in types, ſacrifices, prophecies, epiſtles, or any other way; knows nothing at all of miſery, or torment, or the puniſhment of any creature under heaven, I ſhould have ſaid, *any mere creature*. It ſpeaks much of the diſtreſs, ſorrow, pain, and puniſhment, of Jeſus Chriſt, God-man; by the appointment of the Father, and his own free conſent, ſet apart to ſuffer and die for the ſins of the *whole world*: the anti-type of all the types in the ancient church; "the lamb ſlain from the foundation of the

world!" "The Lamb of God that taketh away the ſin of the world." On this one head, the goſpel tells us of juſt as much "indignation and wrath, tribulation and anguiſh," as the whole law of God does from the beginning to the end of the bible. But, as to any mere man, the goſpel ſays not one uncomfortable word; quite the reverſe. Every word is a word of comfort, it is every where "*glad tidings* of great joy, which ſhall be to *all people*." So Jeſus as the prince of peace, and as the great preacher of it, and as mediator between God and ſinners, ſays, "do not think that I will accuſe you to the Father; there is one that accuſeth you, even Moſes in whom ye truſt."

THE voice of the whole law, and the voice of the goſpel, are exceedingly diſtinct, and diametrically oppoſite. The *law demands perfection; curſes for want of it; and cries vengeance.* The GOSPEL *points out perfection; highly approves of it, and the imputation of it;* and PROCLAIMS SALVATION. The law ſays do well, and thou ſhalt live. The goſpel ſays thou *ſhalt* live, becauſe Chriſt lives, and ſhalt do well. The moral law is no news at all; it is what our reaſon dictates and approves. The goſpel is all news. We never ſhould have thought of it, had it not come in a way of tidings from heaven. It is all *good news*; and there is not one word of *bad news* in it.* It is all good news to ſin-

* Ἀγγελία, *may be bad as well as good; but* Εὐαγγέλιον, *cannot be bad.*

ners, to creatures that might never have expected a word of that kind. It is wholly glad tidings to hell deſerving rebels, who could expect from God no tidings but very bad; even as bad as their nature and ways, and as horrible as all their guilt.

HENCE it appears, that, when we are told of a *goſpel law*, the meaning (to make any ſenſe of it) muſt be the law ſpoken of in Jer. xxxi. 31, &c. and afterwards quoted by the apoſtle, Heb. viii. Even a living principle of obedience, wrought and excited by underſtanding and believing the goſpel; which will ever be the caſe, as will appear in the ſequel. But, in a ſtrict and proper ſenſe of the phraſe, (which is however not found in the bible) a *goſpel law* ſignifies the condemning *power of good news:* Which, at beſt, carries an odd ſound with it.

THE goſpel tells us of the moſt important facts; things of infinite weight and everlaſting importance; and things, in all reſpects, as independent of us, as any things we ever heard of tranſacted in *Aſia*. The news that comes from heaven, is as independent of us, as if we ſhould this day hear ſome news from the planet Saturn, well atteſted. All news makes its way into our minds, and commands our belief; not according to our choice, but, by the weight of its own evidence. Thus it is with this emphatically, *good news*. God brings it to our ſouls with evidence enough when he pleaſes, and it has its effect, according to its nature and importance, as all other information has: The

heart being firſt prepared by almighty power.

It appears fit and worthy of God, to keep his law every where in our ſight, in his revealed will; that we may ſee the true character of Jehovah; and our own character; and our whole duty; with the juſt conſequences of departing from it, even endleſs miſery, as great as our natures are capable of. Rebellion againſt ſuch a God, violation of ſuch obligations, juſtly merits *this*, or *nothing*.

If our obligations to obedience, are not infinite; God is not a Being of infinite perfection and worthineſs. To aſſert which, is equal to atheiſm; for if there is not ſuch a God, there is none. Our ſin can be an infinite evil only in one ſenſe; as oppoſed to a Being of infinite perfection: For finite natures are not capable of diſpoſitions, or deeds infinite in themſelves. Our puniſhment can be infinite only in one ſenſe, viz. endleſs duration: For finite natures are not capable of infinite pain, in any given time.

Thus, endleſs duration of torment, appears obviouſly juſt; no more than we deſerve; and not in the leaſt cruel for God to inflict. Should we, *in fact*, fall under it, every mouth would be ſtopped, and every ſoul would be convinced of ſuch guilt before God, as to render this puniſhment equal, in reaſon and juſtice. And this muſt have been our doom, if another had not, by divine appointment, come in our place.

Now, as I hinted before, it is neceſſary that we know and feel this conviction, deep in our own ſouls, that we may receive *grace* as *grace;* and have proper impreſſions affecting all the powers of our ſouls, in the reception of mere, ſovereign, *infinite mercy*.

To argue, as ſome do, that it is not *juſt* for God to puniſh us eternally, for tranſient ſins in this world, is the perfection of abſurdity; and ariſes from a total ignorance of God and ourſelves, in the true character and relation of each.

We proceed now to conſult the word of God a little more attentively: Not what we imagine God ought to have ſaid; but what he hath verily ſaid. The ſacred oracles came from God, and he hath ſaid in them a great many things, which we ſhould not have put in, had we made a bible. Many things in it appear, not only above my reaſon, but as oppoſite to it, as my command does to my little children when I tell them not to eat a certain fruit, which to them appears exceedingly pleaſant, and greatly excites their appetites, and they have no ſenſe of any harm in it, though I know it is poiſon. Or, when I bid them go to ſchool, and not play, when, *to all their ſenſe and underſtanding*, play is far more eligible.

They, who read ſacred ſcripture, only with a view to make it ſpeak what they judge it ought to ſpeak, and that, after they have owned that it came from God, ſeem to me rather wanting in common ſenſe, or

honeſty. I am quite ſatisfied with what God has ſaid, in its plaineſt meaning; and as well ſatisfied with it, if it is quite above my reaſon, as if it is otherwiſe. Yea, if wholly oppoſite to my beſt reaſonings, I only thence infer my own ignorance and weakneſs, and fully believe and obey my God: even as I will have my little children believe what I tell them, and do what I bid them, though extremely contrary to their puerile ignorance and perverſeneſs. There never was uttered a ſentiment more juſt than this, "*The fooliſhneſs of God is wiſer than men.*"

Now, does the bible plainly ſay that ſinners of mankind ſhall be damned to *interminable puniſhment?* It certainly does; as plainly as language can expreſs, or any man, or even God himſelf can ſpeak. It is quite ſtrange to me, that ſome who believe that all mankind ſhall in the end be ſaved, will trifle as they do with a few words, and moſt of all with the original word, and its derivatives, tranſlated forever, &c.* All the learned know that this word, in the greek, ſignifies an *age*, a *long period*, or *interminable duration*, according as the connected ſenſe requires. This word, with all its repetitions, ſometimes ſignifies no more than a long, limited time; ages of ages; and ſometimes, endleſs duration, when applied to the exiſtence of Jehovah.† But there is

* AI'ΩN.

† *Rev.* iv. 9.--- εἰς τ᾽ας αἰῶνας τῶν αἰώνων.

not the leaſt need of any criticiſm on this word, or any other ſingle word, or phraſe, in the bible.

THERE are expreſs propoſitions and aſſertions enough, in the word of God, to exclude any poſſible termination of the miſery of the damned, as well as to aſſure us, in the plaineſt manner, that mankind ſhall be damned. Matt. v. Luke xii. Mark ix. In which chapters we are plainly taught, that ſinners ſhall abide in hell until they can pay the debt they owe to divine juſtice; which we know is forever impoſſible; and that the fire ſhall *never* be quenched. Plain aſſertions of this tenor, are almoſt innumerable. They, therefore, who would deny that the endleſs damnation of ſinners, is fully aſſerted in the word of God, are unfair in their reaſonings and criticiſms. Beſide, all common ſenſe indicates that if ſinners deſerve any puniſhment, they deſerve an endleſs one. Their miſery will be as everlaſting as the happineſs of the ſaints, and is expreſſed in the ſame words, Matt. xxv. Here it is plainly declared, that when final judgment is cloſed, they ſhall then "go away into everlaſting puniſhment."

AGAIN; does the bible plainly tell us that *all the human race ſhall certainly be ſaved*, and be happy forever, through the merits, power, and faithfulneſs of the Son of God? *It does; as fully and plainly, as it is poſſible for any language to expreſs; and that in ſeveral places.* John i. 29. "Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the ſin of the

world." John iii. 17. "For God ſent not his Son into the world to condemn the world; BUT THAT THE WORLD THROUGH HIM MIGHT BE SAVED." John iv. 42. "- - - the Chriſt, the Savior of the world." John vi. 33. "For the bread of God is he which cometh down from heaven, and giveth life unto the world." John xii. 47. "And if any man hear my words and believe not, I judge him not: For I came not to judge the world, but to ſave the world." 1. John ii. 2. "And he is the propitiation for our ſins: And not for ours only, but alſo for the SINS OF THE WHOLE WORLD." 1. John iv. 14. "And we have ſeen and do teſtify, that the Father ſent the Son to be the Savior of the world." All theſe are taken from only one of the ſacred writers. It is certain, neither he, nor any other man could have ſpoken plainer, on ſuppoſition his only intention was, to aſſert the final ſalvation of every human creature. And never any perſon in the world, would have thought of putting a different conſtruction on any of theſe paſſages, had it not been for a previous opinion, fully ſettled, that ſinners of the human race ſhall perſonally, not vicariouſly be damned to all eternity. They build on as plain ſcripture aſſertions as are in the power of language, *in caſe a vicar or ſubſtitute be excluded.* But perſonal miſery being a truth not in the leaſt to be examined or ſcrupled by them; they have put a conſtruction on whatever is expreſsly oppoſite,

as foreign to plain, common underſtanding, as the power of ſophiſtry can invent. Not knowing any other way to make the whole of the bible true: It being referred by infinite wiſdom to later times; at leaſt to be uttered with leſs reſerve than in former times.

Besides plain aſſertions, as direct and brief as words are capable of, the doctrine of the perſonal ſalvation of all men is clearly taught more at large, and quite as fully, in many parts of divine revelation; if we will only attend to them with a fair unbiaſſed mind.

We ſhould be likely to conclude, that if the people of *Sodom*, are finally ſaved, all ſinners will be; but their final ſalvation is fully aſſerted, though not as the ancient people of God underſtood the covenant of redemption and grace. Ezek. xvi. 53. "When I ſhall bring again their captivity, the captivity of Sodom and her daughters, and the captivity of Samaria and her daughters, then will I bring again the captivity of thy captives in the midſt of them." Ver. 60, to the end of the chapter. "Nevertheleſs, I will remember my covenant with thee in the days of thy youth, and I will eſtabliſh unto thee an everlaſting covenant. Then thou ſhalt remember thy ways, and be aſhamed, when thou ſhalt receive thy ſiſters, thine elder and thy younger: And I will give them unto thee for daughters; but not by thy covenant. And I will eſtabliſh my covenant with thee; and thou shalt know that I am the Lord: That thou mayeſt remember and

be confounded, and never open thy mouth any more becauſe of thy ſhame, when I am pacified toward thee for all that thou haſt done, ſaith the Lord God."

And though, in the true ſenſe of divine revelation they ſuffer the vengeance of eternal fire, as all ſinners muſt; yet in this chapter it is plain enough, without any comment, that infinite, ſovereign power and grace will finally triumph over the utmoſt guilt and wretchedneſs of Sodom. Not as man had thought; not as the Jews had ever underſtood the covenant of redeeming love. "Not by thy covenant."

In the prophet Iſaiah, ſalvation is fairly extended as far as the human race extend. Read chap. xi. and his prophecy at large. So it is in ſeveral paſſages in the other prophets. The point may be fairly inferred from the prophet, where God expreſsly tells us his will and diſpoſition is the damnation of none, but the ſalvation of all: Since we know that by his own Son every obſtacle, every claim of juſtice, every poſſibility of ſtaining his own character, by ſaving whom he will, is wholly removed out of the way. Ezek. xxxiii. 11. "Say unto them, as I live, ſaith the Lord God, I have no pleasure in the death of the wicked, but that the wicked turn from his way and live: Turn ye, turn ye from your evil ways; for why will ye die O houſe of Iſrael?"

What would I have more, to ſecure my ſalvation, than the infinite power, infinite benevolence, and expreſs will of God: Be-

ing assured, by the same God, that he can save me if he will, fully consistent with his own honor, and glory; or that the way is clear and open, in and through Christ, for his infinite good will and all his attributes natural and moral, to be exerted and displayed to the highest advantage in my salvation? I take this reasoning from Paul. When he would engage us in the great duty of prayer, for the salvation of all men, heathen persecuting kings, and all men in authority, though many of their hands were daily stained with the blood of the saints; he tells the church, they had a good foundation to pray for the final salvation of such men, and every vile sinner, on the face of the earth. It is that which is the only foundation of all our faith, and all our prayer; the express *will of God.* 1. Tim. ii. at the beginning. Paul in the sixth verse tells us, that the time infinite wisdom had appointed for a free preaching, and a general understanding of this glorious doctrine, was future. "*To be testified in due time.*"

He well understood God's wise method of gradation, in giving light and comfort to such miserable sinners. In the case of a poor, distressed criminal, condemned to die, and shuddering at his impending fate; if there is a pardon for him, through the mercy of the Judge, it is kind to open to him the good news gradually; lest the sudden shock be too mighty for him. Paul had no direction from his master to speak out clearly all he knew to be true; therefore he ordinarily

uſed milk, and not ſtrong meat; though he had great ſtore of it.

In the fifth chapter to the Romans, Paul ſets up Adam and Chriſt, each as a fœderal head of the human kind, as plainly as words can expreſs; and repeatedly declares, that ſalvation by Chriſt ſhall be quite as extenſive, as ruin by Adam. No man in the world would ever have thought of any other conſtruction of that chapter, had it not been for an antecedent, ſettled prejudice, that moſt of the human race ſhall certainly be damned *in their own perſons*. Any one that will read the chapter, diveſted of ſuch a prejudice of mind, will acknowledge the above repreſentation is indiſputable. But what will not a firm, fixed prejudice do? It will even make us ſay, that "*all men*," ſignifies *a few men*; and that "*much more*," means *much leſs*. Or it will lead us to read the 21ſt verſe thus, "That as ſin hath reigned unto death, even ſo might grace NOT reign, through righteouſneſs, unto eternal life, by Jeſus Chriſt our Lord."

I HAVE no idea that Paul could have ſpoken plainer than he did, 2. Cor. v. On ſuppoſition his deſign had been to announce the final ſalvation of all men, through the almighty power, and grace of God, and the infinite merits of Chriſt. 2. Cor. v. verſe 18, to the end. "And all things are of God, who hath reconciled us to himſelf by Jeſus Chriſt, and hath given to us the miniſtry of reconciliation; to wit, that God was in Chriſt, RECONCILING THE

WORLD UNTO HIMSELF, NOT IMPUTING THEIR TRESPASSES UNTO THEM; and hath committed unto us the word of reconciliation. Now then we are ambaſſadors for Chriſt, as though God did beſeech you by us: We pray you in Chriſt's ſtead, be ye reconciled to God. For he hath made him to be ſin for us, who knew no ſin; that we might be made the righteouſneſs of God in him." No man can make a comment on this; for no words can make the paſſage plainer. Here is the all-ſufficient atonement; here is the infinite love of God, and his grace and mercy infinitely free; his purpoſe fixed, and his power wholly irreſiſtible; and all ſo of God, that no creature, nothing found in any creature, can in the leaſt ſet aſide his immutable decree.

I HAVE diſcourſed with ſeveral that believed in the ſovereign grace of God, in the wideſt extent; but never ſaw one that was able to expreſs the idea with ſo much preciſion, perſpicuity and majeſty, as Paul does, Coloſſ. i. 19, &c. "For it pleaſed the Father, that in him ſhould all fulneſs dwell; and (having made peace through the blood of his croſs) by him to reconcile ALL THINGS unto himſelf; by him, I ſay, whether they be things in earth, or things in heaven. And you that were ſometime alienated, and enemies in your mind by wicked works, yet now hath he reconciled in the body of his fleſh through death, to preſent you holy and unblameable, and unreproveable in his ſight: If ye continue in

the faith grounded and ſettled, and be not moved away from the hope of the goſpel, which ye have heard, and which was preached to every creature which is under heaven ; whereof I Paul am made a miniſter." Perſeverance is neceſſary to ſalvation ; that we know. God will take care of that. Leſt there ſhould be a poſſible idea of limitation, Paul aſſures us, that this goſpel " was preached to every creature which is under heaven," i. e. to all *mankind ;* every other creature receiving as much advantage by *their* ſalvation, as diſadvantage by *their* apoſtacy. And this is explanatory of Rom. viii. 19,—23. where the whole lower creation appears groaning under the total lapſe of human nature, and obtaining full deliverance, in the univerſal reſtoration of the human kind.

It is exceedingly clear, that all who hear the goſpel, are commanded to believe it ; that all who believe it, have life eternal, and have a witneſs of their title thereunto, on their believing; that their believing, does not make the foundation of their faith and ſalvation more true than it was before ; but their faith is built on previous truth. This is the foundation, which neither faith nor infidelity in man, had any hand in laying, or can have any power to remove. For " if we believe not, yet he abideth faithful ; he cannot deny himſelf." 2. Tim. ii. 13.

If we do not believe that to be true, the belief of which centers in a ſure title to

ſalvation, we make God a liar. Any man in the world does this, that does not believe. But if God had not laid a ſure foundation, for the ſure eternal life of *all*; *ſome* would make him true in *not believing*; and a liar in *believing* it. John lets us know, that he that believeth not a record, or teſtimony, which, if believed, would give him a witneſs, make him ſure of eternal life, maketh God a liar. Now, if faith does not create its own object, or lay its own foundation, what can be plainer, than that God hath made ſalvation as ſure to ſinners, *in the object and decree*, before they believe, as afterwards? But I cannot ſpeak plainer than one divinely inſpired. See 1. John, v. 10,—13. "He that believeth on the Son of God, hath the witneſs in himſelf: he that believeth not God, hath made him a liar; becauſe he believeth not the record that God gave of his Son. AND THIS IS THE RECORD, THAT GOD HATH GIVEN TO US ETERNAL LIFE: AND THIS LIFE IS IN HIS SON. He that hath the Son hath life; and he that hath not the Son of God, hath not life. Theſe things have I written unto you that believe on the name of the Son of God; that ye may know that ye have eternal life, and that ye may believe on the name of the Son of God." The apoſtle here aſſures us, that we cannot have the ſenſe, comfort and enjoyment of life, until we have the Son of God, in our ſouls, the object of our faith, and fountain of our life.

BUT, it is clear that neither our faith

or hope, can have any influence on the previous object of our faith, or foundation of our hope; both these are immutable and eternal. Let the state of our minds, at present, be whatever it may, "nevertheless the foundation of God standeth sure, having this seal, the Lord knoweth them that are his." And when we come to know the truth, then will follow, as a fruit and consequence, all holiness and virtue. "And let every one that nameth the name of Christ, depart from iniquity."

The apostles, in all their preaching, commanded every one of their hearers to believe saving truth, on pain of damnation, knowing, at the same time, that their belief, or unbelief, would not in the least alter that truth. Yet their comfort in the truth, depended on their acquaintance with it, and belief of it; and without belief they must be damned. But Christ has engaged for their knowledge and belief of the truth, in his own time, as surely as he hath laid the foundation for it, or become the object of it. For his three great offices apply to every poor sinner alike. To whomsoever he is a priest, to him also he will be a prophet and a king. Illumination, regeneration, sanctification and perseverance to eternal life, *are as absolutely from God as the atonement was.* "All things are of God." "Of him, and through him, and to him, are all things, to whom be glory forever, Amen." The Redeemer of sinners, *so fallen as we are,*

faith it not in vain, " I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the ending, the firſt and the laſt. " Let him that is athirſt come: And whoſoever will, let him take the water of life freely." He hath engaged to give the appetite, as well as its object: " Him hath God exalted, with his right hand, to be a Prince and a Savior, for to *give repentance* to *Iſrael* and *forgiveneſs* of ſins, i. e. to all given to Chriſt in covenant, all families of the earth in Abraham. Repentance and pardon, faith and juſtification, holineſs and heavenly glory, are all alike the gift of the Son of God, and alike within his divine commiſſion and engagement.

Here the reader may wiſh to ſee the extent of the covenant, or engagement between the Father and the Son; whether it extends to all mankind, or only to a part. This ſhall be moſt carefully, and impartially attended to, in a proper place; as I would, at preſent, continue my chain of thought, on the apoſtolic manner of preaching, as well as the matter of it.

The whole which the apoſtles preached, as goſpel, was the atonement of Chriſt, and its whole import; with all things connected with it, and all the fruits and conſequences of it. Indeed they kept the law every where in view, in all their preaching. The deſign of this was, that the hearts of men might be well diſpoſed to receive and obey the goſpel.

The pure goſpel which they preached, was juſt what I have now mentioned;

" nothing but Jesus Christ and him crucified," i. e. the character and offices of Christ, with his obedience unto death, and the whole import of it. They held up Christ as a compleat Savior, in whom God shews mercy to sinners. They excluded every thing in man, from having any, *the remotest* share in the matter of his justification, or reconciliation to God: Every thing, I say, good as well as bad; grace after the implantation of it, as well as enmity before. They considered justification and acceptance with God, not as any real change in the sinner, but a change *wholly relative*. " To him that worketh not, but believeth on him that justifieth the *ungodly*, his faith is *counted* for righteousness."

Faith is, in the nature of things, necessary to an experience and enjoyment of the benefit, as well as by express divine appointment. But faith does not create the benefit; or change the divine purpose; or make any alteration in the previous certainty of any thing in the universe: As my hearing any piece of news from afar, well attested, and believing it, makes no alteration as to the fact, which is the object of my belief.

Suppose, my kinsman in Judea died ten years ago, and left me all his large estate, by will, well authenticated. I never heard of his death or good will to me, until two years ago, and then I did not believe it. The evidence I then had did not command my assent. Ten days ago, the intelligence came with such demonstration and weight

of evidence, that I could not help believing it, and was much affected with the wonderful love and rich kindneſs of my good kinſman. For I knew I had always been a moſt injurious, ungrateful wretch to him; and had always diſhonored him as much as was in my power; and would have killed him, many a time, had I been able. I was certain that he knew all this. Which, by the way, was the grand reaſon why I could not before believe the good news, on former reports; and continued to wander about ſtarving, in rags, beggary and ſhame. But the evidence, at laſt, was attended with ſuch light of truth, and the power of demonſtration, that it commanded my entire belief.

I NOW enjoy the comfort of a rich inheritance, and my whole ſoul is much moved with the kindneſs of my abuſed kinſman. I think of him and all his goodneſs, and of myſelf, and all my horrid wickedneſs, very differently from what I did in the days of my vile enmity and malice againſt my beſt friend; and it affects all my conduct. Yet the inheritance was as ſurely mine two, or ten years ago, or even at the moment of my kinſman's death, as it is now, or ever will be.

BEFORE I believed this news, I was *condemned*, or *damned* to beggary and infamy, and ſhould have been ſo all my days, had I not heard and believed it; but now I am rich, and abound in all things, through my *bleſſed, good* benefactor, and in full oppoſition to all my deſerts. I have no heart, *now*, to

feel towards him, or ſpeak of him as I once did. So "the grace of God that bringeth ſalvation, hath appeared to *all men;* teaching us that denying ungodlineſs and worldly luſts, we ſhould live ſoberly, righteouſly and godly, in this preſent world; *looking for that bleſſed hope*, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Savior Jeſus Chriſt: Who gave himſelf for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto himſelf a peculiar people, zealous of good works." Titus ii.

The apoſtles every where preached, *as pure goſpel*, God wholly reconciled, *but ſinners not.* Rom. v. 2. Cor. v. Coloſſ. i. Heb. ii. 17. In preaching the *pure goſpel*, they always affirmed, that God hath nothing, *nothing at all*, againſt any ſinner, in the world, to effect his *final condemnation;* that all he ever had againſt them, was fully ſatisfied by their ſurety; that he had borne all their ſins, in his own body on the tree; that "he was bruiſed for their iniquities, and wounded for their tranſgreſſions; that the chaſtiſement of their peace was upon him, and that by his ſtripes they are healed;" "that Meſſiah was cut off; but not for himſelf." Many a glorious hour they ſounded the goſpel in this very ſtrain; but then, as a proper introduction of it as a meſſage of grace to the hearts of men, they always ſeaſoned it with the fiery and dreadful law. Yet this was no part of the goſpel; but quite the counterpart.

Thus, the preaching of all the prophets,

that of Chriſt and all the apoſtles, was mixed preaching. The law and goſpel were carried along together, though diſtinct, and even oppoſite in their natures. Thus all ſkilful preachers do, in theſe days, and will to the end of the world. The propriety of it is very great, for the reaſon I have mentioned. Yea, I ſay further, that the ſame thing will be kept in view in heaven to all eternity; the law and the goſpel, both in full life and vigor, on the minds of all the redeemed of mankind. This will be neceſſary to keep up their emotions of gratitude, and their warmeſt ſenſe of the infinite obligations they are under to their God and their Redeemer. They will often name their Redeemer in their anthems and hallelujahs; but cannot call him by that name, without calling to mind what they once were, and what they were redeemed from. Their ſong will be in this divine ſtrain, "Thou art worthy; for thou waſt ſlain, and haſt redeemed us to God by thy blood." Rev. v. 9.

SAINTS in heaven, to all eternity, will feel themſelves *in themſelves*, as worthy of damnation, as the devils in hell. They will know that they themſelves have made no amends to juſtice, *becauſe infinite power and grace hath made them holy*. They will ſee, and feel, that *ſeparate from their head*, the loweſt hell is their juſt due: They will *ſee* and *feel* this, *deep in their ſouls* forever more; and *in this ſenſe* "the ſmoke of their torment will aſcend up forever and ever." And

this view of the damned, *in the glaſs of juſtice*, will give them the keeneſt reliſh of grace, *free grace, mere mercy, ſovereign mercy*, and forever animate the body of Chriſt, with raptures of love unutterable.

THE apoſtles, in what they preached *as goſpel, good news, glad tidings*, to all people; never made any the leaſt diſtinction between the certain ſalvation of one ſinner and another. They, every where, *mixed in the law*; and *this* again made no diſtinction: For every word of it damned the preacher, and all his hearers. It condemned every thing ſhort of abſolute perfection. With one juſt and awful voice, it always damned all *human nature*; and even the human nature of the Son of God, in a way of ſuretiſhip, or imputation. "He who knew no ſin was made ſin for us, that we might be made the righteouſneſs of God in him."

BUT, the apoſtles always made a great and clear diſtinction, between one ſinner and another, as to preſent privileges and enjoyment, and alſo with regard to the degree of future bleſſedneſs. The penitent, believing ſinner, they declared juſtified, pardoned, entitled to eternal life, and a bleſſed degree of comfort, *even now*. The impenitent ſinner, and the unbeliever, they pronounced *unpardoned*, unjuſtified, condemned already; and affirmed that the wrath of God did abide on him.

THEY every where aſſerted, that early piety, and eminent holineſs in this life, would have a great advantage over a long life of

ſin, or later piety, or leſs holineſs and uſefulneſs : Not only in regard to peace and tranquility, comfort and delight of ſoul, in this world ; but even with reſpect to the weight of glory in the world to come. Yet, they always, *as goſpel*, affirmed the final ſalvation of all mankind alike. Paul, and his brethren were indeed very earneſt on this head ; and ready to labor this point effectually ; and to ſuffer any reproach they might meet with, on the account of this glorious doctrine. 1. Tim. iv. 10. " For therefore we both labor and ſuffer reproach, becauſe we truſt in the living God, who is the *Savior of all men, ſpecially* of thoſe that believe ; theſe things command and teach ;" i. e. build on this principle, with ſuch degree of explanation as the divine ſpirit may direct, at the preſent period of time : It being the will of God that light ſhall yet increaſe. The difference beforementioned, is very *ſpecial*, very great indeed, between thoſe who now believe, and repent, and obey the goſpel, and delight their ſouls in all the conſolations of it : And thoſe who are now in unbelief under the damnable power of impenitence, and every hateful luſt. Chriſt is the Savior of the *former eſpecially*,, but, *if Paul is not miſtaken*, he is the SAVIOR OF ALL MEN, at laſt.

THE interſperſion of the law with the goſpel, is exceedingly manifeſt, through the whole word of God. This conſideration is neceſſary, to vindicate the holy ſcriptures againſt the charge of contradiction. There

is no other poſſible way to do this; neither is their need of any other way. It is ſo common every where, that it is ſcarcely expedient to ſingle out any paſſages in particular. I will refer, however, to one or two, as a general ſpecimen. Iſai. xliii. 21, &c. "This people have I formed for myſelf; they ſhall ſhew forth my praiſe. But thou haſt not called upon me, O Jacob; but thou haſt been weary of me, O Iſrael. Thou haſt not brought me the ſmall cattle of thy burnt-offerings, neither haſt thou honored me with thy ſacrifices. I have not cauſed thee to ſerve with an offering, nor wearied thee with increaſe. Thou haſt brought me no ſweet cane with money, neither haſt thou filled me with the fat of thy ſacrifices; but thou haſt made me to ſerve with thy ſins, thou haſt wearied me with thine iniquities. I, even I, am he that blotteth out thy tranſgreſſions FOR MINE OWN SAKE, and will not remember thy ſins. Put me in remembrance: let us plead together: declare thou that thou mayeſt be juſtified." See alſo, Iſai. lvii. 13. to the end. Iſai. lxiii. throughout.

INDEED, all the prophets abundantly uſe this method of keeping law and goſpel in view; and would be guilty of the groſſeſt contradictions in the world, upon any other ſuppoſition. The apoſtles do the like. The ſame well connected ſcheme runs on to the final judgment, with an aſpect to endleſs eternity. For, when judgment is cloſed, and the myſtery of God, in this world fin-

iſhed, this ſame thought extends into eternity, and, as I ſaid before, ſhall forever be kept in full view. "Theſe ſhall go away into everlaſting puniſhment; but the righteous into life eternal." Matt. xxv. i. e. The voice of law and juſtice is *everlaſting puniſhment* to ſinful men, conſidered in their *perſonal character;* but in the *righteous character* of their atoning Sponſor, the goſpel proclaims life eternal. Two different characters are the very things here in view. And this is not at all uncommon in laws and rules, divine and human. The character is often named, and the perſon omitted, though ſome perſon always ſtands connected with the character, and is underſtood in that connection.

MANKIND, in the paſſage juſt quoted, are conſidered in *two characters:* In their own *perſonally;* and then the voice of the righteous law is, "theſe ſhall go away into everlaſting puniſhment:" And, in *Chriſt, the righteous*, by union of faith, (and all ſhall certainly have this before the judgment day, as will appear in its proper place,) and, in this character, the goſpel ſpeaks, and the law alſo, as ſatisfied in the atonement: "But the righteous into life eternal." The *perſon* is deſignated by the *character*, which is frequent in the common language of mankind, as when we ſay, *the ruler, the judge, the ſubject, the king, the creditor, the debtor*, &c. ſome perſon is always underſtood, to whom the character applies.

I KNOW that a character cannot ſuffer

pain, or enjoy happineſs, ſeparate from the perſon; and an objector may here ſay, "this deſtroys the force of the argument." But I think it does not at all: For the perſon deſignated by the character, can enjoy, or ſuffer. All mankind will ſuſtain both of theſe *characters*, at the day of judgment; *that* of the wicked *in themſelves perſonally*; and *that of the righteous*, in the Son of God, by union and imputation.

THE objector may ſay, "this doctrine as much proves that all ſhall go to hell, as that all ſhall go to heaven; or, that all ſhall go away into everlaſting puniſhment, and alſo into life eternal, which is impoſſible; for the perſon can go but one way." It is true, the perſon can go but one way, and the perſon only can ſuffer, or enjoy; but the wicked *character* is capable of remaining an everlaſting object of wrath, ſhame, contempt, and damnation, or condemnation, and will ſo, in the view of God, and all holy intelligencies. The righteous character will remain an eternal object of approbation, worthy of life eternal.

BUT which way ſhall the perſons of mankind go? They are deſignated both ways, and oppoſite ways, by their oppoſite characters, and they can go but one, and they are all, you ſay, to go together; by the voice of the law and juſtice to hell; by the voice of redeeming love in Chriſt, to heaven. Which way ſhall they all go? Which ſhall get the victory? The ſentence of perſonal juſtice; or the declaration of grace through

the atonement? Which voice, or ſentence ſhall triumph? Which ſhall reign? It is a weighty, all important queſtion; the man of inſpiration ſhall decide it. "But where ſin abounded grace did much more abound: that as ſin hath reigned unto death, even ſo might GRACE REIGN THROUGH RIGHTEOUSNESS TO ETERNAL LIFE, BY JESUS CHRIST OUR LORD." Rom. v. 20, 21.

WHOEVER will, with a mind entirely unbiaſſed, read the whole chapter with due attention, will ſee this grand point fairly ſtated, fully diſcuſſed, and as fairly decided, as the power of language can expreſs. There the firſt and ſecond Adam, each a fœderal head to *all men*, are ſet in full contraſt: Juſtice and grace, the law and goſpel, death and life, condemnation and juſtification, obedience and diſobedience. The *approved term* has all along a "*much more*" affixed to it; and every where triumphs over its *oppoſite*. Chriſt and the goſpel, grace and life, juſtification and obedience, every where abound, reign, and triumph, over all the rebellion and guilt of the firſt Adam, and that of all his race, even, in the deepeſt colors, moſt awful malignity, and *wideſt extent* of it.

AND the general tenor of divine revelation, bears this uniform aſpect; exhibiting and aſcertaining the univerſal victory of the ſeed of the woman, over that of the ſerpent. "As I live ſaith the Lord, every knee ſhall bow to me, and every tongue ſhall confeſs to God." "Look unto me and be ye ſaved, *all*

the ends of the earth; for I am God and there is none elſe. I have ſworn by myſelf, the word is gone out of my mouth in righteouſneſs, and ſhall not return; that unto me every knee ſhall bow, every tongue ſhall ſwear. Surely ſhall one ſay, in the Lord have I righteouſneſs and ſtrength; even to him ſhall men come, and all that are incenſed againſt him ſhall be aſhamed." Iſai. xlv. 22, &c. "Being found in faſhion as a man, he humbled himſelf, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the croſs. Wherefore, God alſo hath highly exalted him, and given him a name which is above every name; that, at the name of Jeſus, *every knee* ſhould bow; of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth; and that *every tongue* ſhould confeſs, that Jeſus Chriſt is Lord, to the glory of God the Father." Phil. ii. 8, &c.

WHENEVER the apoſtles preached to a mixed multitude, as they often did, they commanded them by divine authority to believe, every one the ſelf ſame truth. And it was the duty of every one to believe the ſame, and a great ſin for any one not to believe. The warrant of faith was the ſame to all; the *object*, the *foundation* the ſame, as preſented to all. They, who believed, reſted on ſure ſalvation; yet their faith made nothing true that was not true before, as to the foundation on which their whole dependance reſted. Had they not believed, at that time, "nevertheleſs the foundation of God would have ſtood equally ſure, and

with the ſame ſeal." "And what if ſome did not believe? ſhall their unbelief make the faith *(faithfulneſs)* of God without effect? God forbid: yea let God be true and every man a liar." Rom. iii. 3, &c.

Now reader, turn to the bible and read that chapter to the end. You will ſee the ſalvation of all the human kind alike ſecured, in the firm decree, and ſovereign love of God, and in the atonement, power, and faithfulneſs of his Son; and all diſtinctions among men removed out of the way, as fully as words can poſſibly expreſs. The preaching is mixed, as uſual; the law, in all its infinite purity and amazing terror, condemning all mankind *alike;* and the goſpel, in all its triumphant glory with the ſame aſpect of *ſure ſalvation* to every child of Adam. This idea being every where attended to by the inſpired writers, viz. that faith alone gives every poor, apoſtate ſinner, ſenſe, enjoyment, and final aſſurance of ſalvation, in his own ſoul. The law is eſtabliſhed, and the goſpel triumphant in the final redemption of human nature.

It is manifeſt enough, that all could not take the benefit, in caſe they did believe, unleſs there was a previous, ſure foundation, alike for every one. No one lays the foundation by his faith; but all build upon it. "Other foundation can no man lay, than that which is laid, which is Jeſus Chriſt." Faith, agreeably to every juſt idea we can form of it, never had, never can have, any other province than this; to give us ſenſe

and enjoyment of an unalterable fact or object, if comfortable; or diſtreſs, if the reverſe. Oppoſite objects are equally the objects of our belief. Two men are deſtined to certain death, by an enraged band of furious aſſaſſins, in cloſe purſuit. The *one* can ſee and hear well, and knows he muſt die immediately, and is in awful terror; the *other* is totally blind and deaf. Is not the death of the latter as ſurely impending as that of his fellow? The *one* hath *ſenſe*, the *other* not; but the dreadful decree is alike ſure to both.

I PROCEED now to conſider the decrees of God, or doctrine of election, according to reaſon and divine revelation. It manifeſtly ſtandeth thus.

THERE was a period in eternal duration, which God inhabits, or filleth up, (as in ſcripture phraſe he is ſaid to inhabit eternity) in which there was no exiſtence but God only, and when deity had in full view all poſſible exiſtence. Out of which infinite comprehenſion, or view of all things, he might create what he pleaſed. He ſaw what was beſt to be brought into actual exiſtence, and what not; or what would form the wiſeſt, beſt, moſt perfect, and moſt benevolent ſyſtem of creation. This his wiſdom and goodneſs moved him to determine to bring into actual exiſtence, in the fitteſt time and manner. On this choice, his knowledge of all actual, future exiſtence was founded, according to our beſt manner of

conception. He determined what ſhould be, when he might as well have determined otherwiſe, if he had ſeen it beſt; and, in that caſe, would have otherwiſe decreed. Then the ſyſtem would have been different from what it now is, or ever will be; alſo, he would have foreknown it as a different ſyſtem. But, ſeeing as he did, with infinite wiſdom and goodneſs, what would be beſt, he eternally determined what ſhould, in due time, take place in the ſcale of exiſtence.

On this, according to all the rational conceptions of man, was founded his certain foreknowledge of all real, future being, or exiſtence, in the univerſal ſyſtem; I ſay his foreknowledge of *every thing*, without the leaſt exception, from the greateſt world and higheſt creature that ever he did, or will create, to the very leaſt and loweſt; from the higheſt angel to the minuteſt reptile or inſect; and from the greateſt world to the leaſt particle or atom of duſt; including every thing of a moral nature, every thought, volition or inclination of all moral agents, that ſhould ever come into being; all their different meaſures, capacities, powers, talents, motives and diſpoſitions; and the univerſal connection and reſult of the whole, as well as every ſingle and particular operation. In a word, he eternally foreknew all actual, future exiſtence, moral and natural, without a poſſibility of miſtake.

This knowledge was founded in his own infinitely wiſe choice, and unalterable determination or decree: Or, if you pleaſe, his

infinitely wife and good election. And every thing moral and natural, every being and mode of being, every circumftance, every connection and conſequence throughout the whole ſcale or ſyſtem of being, did originally, abſolutely depend on the choice, election, decree, or predeſtination of the eternal, immutable Jehovah. And all things, in actual being, have now the ſame entire, abſolute dependance, and ever will have to all eternity.

I CAN conceive of no God at all, but in the above view. If I recede in the leaſt from this idea, I fall into complete atheiſm. Divine revelation is plain upon this ſubject. "Of him, and through him, and to him, are all things." "He is of one mind and who can change him? and what his ſoul deſireth that he doth." "Of whom took he counſel?" "He doeth according to his will, in the army of heaven, and among the inhabitants of the earth; and none can ſtay his hand, or ſay unto him, what doeſt thou?" I might recite a thouſand ſentences full to the ſame purpoſe; but it is needleſs. Read the whole book of Job, and you will ſee every argument there founded on the doctrine of the divine determinations, and the infuſtrable accompliſhment of them all; and the infinite fitneſs it ſhould be ſo. Indeed there can be nothing more conſpicuous every where, through the whole bible. And in the reaſonings of man, there can be no ſtep between this idea of God, and atheiſm.

I HAVE ſaid, that God's predeſtination, foreknowledge, election, choice, decrees, (or whatever name by which you indicate the ſame thought) are alike concerned with all exiſtence, and all modes of exiſtence, both natural and moral, to all extent of ſpace, and to all endleſs duration. This is indeed true, and thus far gives us a becoming view of God. But I am now to apply this grand truth to the concerns of our ſalvation alone, according to the plain word of God. *Therein* the doctrine of God's fixed election, or choice; his determinate counſel and foreknowledge; his ſure, unfailing predeſtination; his purpoſes in himſelf before creation began, are expreſſed as plainly as any thing can be expreſſed, and exactly agreeable to all our rational ideas of a Supreme Being.

IN divine revelation, we find the election, decree, predeſtination, or appointment of God, with reſpect to ſeveral objects; but in every caſe alike fixed and certain. It may ſuffice to conſider the doctrine only in four reſpects; from whence we may eaſily make application to every other caſe. In regard, *Firſt;* To particular men. *Secondly;* To ſome particular events. *Thirdly;* To particular communities of men. *Fourthly;* To the eternal ſalvation of men.

IN *God's revealed will,* his election, or predeſtination hath ſometimes ſpecial regard to ſome particular men, in diſtinction from others; and is always ſovereign, and becoming God, who never can foreſee any diſtinctions among creatures, but what, from

all eternity, he was determined himself to make.

THUS, he elected Abraham to be a favorite of his, the father of his covenant people, rather than Nahor. Thus, for wise and holy ends, he chose that Pharaoh should be an example of great obstinacy, rather than Moses. Rom. ix. Thus he elected Jacob to many blessings rather than Esau; David, rather than Shimei, or Saul; Cyrus, rather than Nebuchadnezzar; Paul to know and enjoy the consolations of the gospel, in early life, and, for a happy season in this world, rather than Pilate. It is needless to multiply particular instances. In a word; it is founded on God's election, choice, or predestination, that any man in the world, is, *in this life*, in circumstances more eligible than his neighbor, or any other man. All these things are wholly of God, and of his eternal purpose, however they may be effected by the instrumentality, or different conduct of moral agents: For even all their different conduct, and every different inclination in the universe, has an equal and absolute dependance on the eternal, fixed purpose and plan that was unalterable, in the mind of Jehovah, before creation began. This may serve as a specimen of what is intended by election, or the choice of God, as to all distinctions among men in this world.

WITH regard to God's eternal election, or choice relative to all events that take place in time, predestination is of the same general consideration.

THUS, it was predeſtinated that the deliverance of Iſrael, and the overthrow of their enemies, ſhould be at the time, and in the manner it was at the red ſea, rather than at a different time, and in another manner: That the deliverance of God's people from their captivity in Babylon, ſhould be in all circumſtances as it was, when it might have been effected with a thouſand different circumſtances, had Jehovah ſeen fit, and ſo determined. There was the choice and election of God in all this. Iſai. xlv. and xlvi. So with regard to the crucifixion of Chriſt, the time, manner, and whole inſtrumentality, was eternally fixed, in the divine purpoſe. Acts ii. 23. "Him, being delivered by the determinate counſel and foreknowledge of God, ye have taken, and by wicked hands have crucified and ſlain." It is juſt ſo with all events, from the greateſt to the leaſt, and all diſtinctions among them.

THE ſame reaſoning applies with regard to all communities of mankind in the world, and all their diſtinctions. The eternal choice or election of God, before there was any creature, eſtabliſhed the future certainty of all theſe things; and thereupon was God's foreknowledge of all theſe *then* future events founded.

THUS the Jews were elected to enjoy the ſpecial privileges of divine revelation, for a long ſeaſon, in diſtinction from all their fellow-men beſide. Alſo, a few among them were elected to know and enjoy inward ſaving conſolation, in this world, in diſtinc-

tion from the great majority of that nation. So the Greeks and Romans, in ancient times, were elected to enjoy the many bleſſings of civilization, learning, and extenſive empire, in diſtinction from the ignorant and barbarous nations of the world. Thus alſo, many particular perſons of thoſe learned and polite nations, were predeſtinated to ſpecial acquirements and bleſſings of knowledge and uſefulneſs, in diſtinction from the body of thoſe nations. Innumerable inſtances of the like kind, in a greater or leſs degree, have been found among men, and bodies or communities of men, wherein the eternal predeſtination of God, has, in due time, appeared.

Not only all particular perſons that are wiſe and virtuous, holy and good, in this life; but alſo all churches or holy communities, that, *as ſuch*, ſuſtain the character now mentioned, enjoy alſo, all the privileges and comforts connected with ſuch a character, *in this life*, in conſequence of the eternal election, or free, ſovereign choice of God. And they are, in this proper and very important ſenſe, *the elect*; in contradiſtinction from thoſe that yet live in blindneſs, and are tormented by the cruel power of unſanctified nature, and diſtreſſed in the awful ſlavery of ſin. They likewiſe, *as holy, virtuous and uſeful communities*, are elected to a ſuperior and diſtinguiſhed reward of grace in the world to come.

In this view, they ſtand diſtinguiſhed from thoſe that yet live in ignorance of God

and ſalvation, and without uſefulneſs in the world; thoſe that are yet haters of God, and oppoſed to the higheſt good of his creatures. From all ſuch, I ſay, thoſe who now know God, love and ſerve him, and ſerve their generation by his will, are greatly diſtinguiſhed, by the election of God. This is abundantly taken notice of in the word of God; for a ſpecimen, read Epheſ. i.

WHENEVER election, or predeſtination, in ſacred ſcripture, *doth diſtinguiſh one perſon*, or *one community*, or *deſcription of perſons*, *from another*, it never hath the leaſt regard to any thing *beyond the grave;* excepting a difference in degree of felicity.

IN the laſt place, the doctrine of predeſtination hath, in the ſacred oracles, great and frequent reſpect to our everlaſting ſalvation after death.

IT is a miſtaken apprehenſion, in ſome, that *election*, *decree*, *predeſtination*, &c. neceſſarily implies diſtinction between ſome and others of mankind. The words do not *neceſſarily*, or even *naturally*, imply any ſuch thing. It may, or may not be included in the idea, or ſignified by any of thoſe terms, with equal propriety. This diſtinction is ſignified, as I have ſhewn, as to advantages and diſadvantages in this world, and degrees of happineſs in the world to come. But, the words, decree, predeſtination, election, and the like, might be uſed with equal propriety, were there never any diſtinction at all to be made between one man and another, either in this world or that to come. All words

of this import, only ſignify a firm and fixed purpoſe; an immutable determination of God; an eſtabliſhment irreverſible; an unalterable plan of conduct, laying out what ſhall take place and what not.

If God had *choſen*, *decreed*, or *predeſtinated* that never any evil ſhould exiſt, either moral or natural; the whole plan would have ſtood upon God's election, predeſtination, or decree, as much as it does now. It is therefore wholly a miſtake, to ſuppoſe the words carry in them naturally any idea of diſtinction. If all the other planets in the ſolar ſyſtem, are full of rational inhabitants, as is very probable, and if they are all holy and happy, which may be the caſe; yet their condition is founded on the eternal choice, decree, and predeſtination of the Creator as much as ours. The eternal plan, whatever it be, whether more ſimple or mixed, is alike built on God's election, decree or predeſtination. On any ſuppoſition, it is juſt what God determined it ſhould be, in every relation and circumſtance.

To know what the decrees of God are, or what his election, choice, or predeſtination is, in regard to mankind after this life, we muſt conſult what he hath told us, and abide only by what he hath revealed to us in his word. I have before ſaid, that there is not one thought of diſtinction between one man and another, intimated to us in the whole bible, with regard to their *certain ſalvation*, in the life to come; though, as to the *differ-*

ent degree of happineſs, the diſtinction is manifeſt.

THE divine will, puproſe, election, decree, predeſtination, or by whatever term you would ſignify the eternal, immutable plan of Jehovah, does, every where in his word, *fully ſecure the certain happineſs of* ALL *the human race*, after death. This aſſertion is bold, the reader may ſay; I therefore now appeal to God's own word for the truth of it.

THE words, *decree*, *predeſtination*, *purpoſe*, *and election* (which, the learned will bear me witneſs, are terms promiſcuouſly uſed in tranſlating the ſame original *hebrew and greek)* with their derivatives, are brought to our view one hundred and twenty four times, in the old and new teſtament. They moſtly refer to things of a temporal kind; and in this ſenſe, a diſtinction between one man, or one body of men and another is generally clear enough. Some are elected to privileges and enjoyments, in this world, either civil or religious, and others omitted. This is frequent, as to temporal matters, or enjoyments during this life, or any period of time pointed out. Of this deſcription is the caſe of Eſau and Jacob; in which nothing at all is included but what is of a temporal nature with regard to them and their poſterity: Alſo, that of Abraham and his ſeed; in which nothing after death is made peculiar to them, only, as Abraham and his ſeed were typical of Chriſt and the church univerſal. In this view, all mankind ſhare alike in the election of that pa-

triarch, and that people, as will ſoon appear. So in the election of Cyrus, for great purpoſes in this world; and almoſt every where in the ſacred oracles, theſe terms denote only what was to begin and end in a certain period of time. And, it is always ſo, when any diſtinction is made between one man, or one deſcription of men and another, excepting the decrees of future happineſs.

We now further attend to the divine purpoſe, or election, only as it reſpects the eternal ſalvation of mankind, after this life. Here, every reader, that hath that rare attainment of reading and thinking wholly without previous bias of mind, will ſee there is no diſtinction at all, as to the *certain ſalvation* of the human kind. In this view, God has *one elect head* and no more; and *one elect body* and no more. The *elect head* is Ben-Adam, the *Son of man*, in equal connection with all human nature. The *elect body* is all human nature.

The forgetful reader may here cry out, where then is the diſtinction which election implies? But have I not ſufficiently ſhewn, that the term implies no ſuch thing neceſſarily, or even naturally. There may be a diſtinction, or there may not, conſiſtent with the natural meaning of this word, or any other word of like meaning, as predeſtination, purpoſe, decree, determinate counſel, &c. All theſe phraſes import a certain, fixed, unalterable plan of Deity; whether that

plan contains many distinctions, or none at all. The reader will pardon this sudden repetition, as the idea is of essential importance.

I now say again, that election, or predestination, as it respects mankind, after death, centres in one head, CHRIST *the Son of God, the Son of man, the only mediator* between God and man; and *all human kind, as his kindred body.* This head is in a like *natural* and *federal* connection with the whole body of human nature. Hence we find the Messiah never calling himself the *Son of Abraham*, or the *Son of David*, (though others might sometimes call him so) but *Ben-Adam the Son* of *man.* We find some of the prophets frequently so called of God, as types of Christ. The mediator, in his person and in his types, is pointed out by this epithet, about one hundred and fifty times, in the prophets and in the new testament; and almost every time he speaks of himself, he uses this term. I do not recollect that he ever called himself the Son of Abraham, or of Noah, or the Son of David, or of any man that ever was, except the first Adam.

THE reader will remember, as I have intimated, (and the learned all know it well) that the Son of man is in the hebrew, literally *the Son of Adam*, and the meaning the same in the original greek. This is the phrase our Savior generally useth, when speaking of himself; and manifestly for no other reason, than to keep in our view his relation to, and connection with *human na-*

ture, in the univerſal extent of it, without any diſtinction, or any more connection with one man, or one deſcription of men, than with another.

It is true, he is pointed out ſometimes by the prophets, as the ſeed of Abraham; the branch of Jeſſe; the ſon of David, &c. But theſe deſcriptions of him are only to direct the church or people of God, and all that waited for the Meſſiah, how to know when the true Meſſiah did indeed come. And the tribe of Judah, and town of Bethlehem are mentioned for the ſame end, with many other deſcriptions, that we may know the true Meſſiah, and be guarded againſt all impoſtors. But Chriſt, in his human nature, never had any more intimate connection with Abraham, Judah, or David, in contradiſtinction from human nature in general, than he had with Judea, or Bethlehem, in contradiſtinction from any other country, or town in the world. We know he had none with thoſe places, that made him a peculiar Savior to them, in diſtinction from other parts of the world; though he was born in that country, and in that town.

Indeed, human nature is identically one now, juſt as much as it was, when all were in Adam. Eve was of him, and all human nature is ſo. The ſhooting out of many branches, does not, in the leaſt, alter the nature of the tree. We have had no intermarriages with any other ſpecies to divide or alienate the blood. All human fleſh is called "*thy own fleſh.*" All human blood is one blood.

"God hath made of *one blood* all nations to dwell upon the face of the earth." Hence, with me, there is no doubt, that the *second man, the Lord from heaven* hath chosen this epithet, when speaking of himself so many times, both typically and personally, to impress on our minds a sense of his common, equal union and connection with all human nature, as our *Goel*, or kinsman Redeemer.

Now, I say this Son of man is God's only object, as an elect head in regard to our eternal salvation; and all human nature is his *one entire elect object*, in union with Christ, as a body with a head. The Savior expressly says "he came to seek and to save, not some of those that were lost; but" *that which was lost, that humanity; that nature; that complex body;* which he so often by the spirit of inspiration calls *the world; the whole world; all men; all nations; all people.* "Glad tidings of great joy shall be unto *all people.*" But I may speak more of the elect body, after I have further attended to the elect head. The second man, or the Son of man is often called *God's elect*, or *chosen*, by way of emphasis; and the fountain of life to all men; and a substitute, or surety in the place of a whole fallen world; or covenant head of all human nature.

No believer, I think, ever will doubt but that the Son of man, the Savior of the world is spoken of, under the type of David. Psal. lxxxix. 1,—37. There we find him God's elect, or chosen, connected with all the world, by way of command and subjugation.

This all allow, *in Chriſt*, denotes ſpiritual conqueſt and victory. There we find God has entered into covenant with him, as one he has choſen out of the people. The Father ſpeaks to him as Son of man; and ſpeaks to him ſome things peculiar to the divine nature, and many things to him as mediator and redeemer. Particularly, that the heavens ſhall praiſe his wonders; that none in heaven or among the ſons of the mighty can be compared with him; that the heavens are his, the earth alſo and the fulneſs of it; that the people are bleſſed, who become acquainted with him, or know the joyful ſound of his grace and love. God gives him full dominion to the utmoſt extent of the earth; to every ſea and every river; and makes every mountain to rejoice in his ſtrength, i. e. the power of his ſalvation; attributes to him a redeeming power, equal and extenſive as his creative power. Here is God's elect head of mankind, God's choſen, and here is deſcribed the extent of his dominion in the world. In the ſecond pſalm, he is ſet up with like elective appointment, and extenſive dominion; with power to break and daſh effectually, until all bow to him, from the loftieſt king, to the moſt obſcure peaſant in the uttermoſt parts of the earth.

In the lxxii. pſalm it is declared that his ſaving power ſhall be extended over the whole earth. All nations, the greater with the leſs, it is ſaid, ſhall partake of his peace and righteouſneſs, and bring forth the fruit of the ſame. "The mountains ſhall bring

peace to the people and the little hills by righteouſneſs." "They ſhall fear him, as long as the ſun and moon endure, throughout all generations." "He ſhall have dominion from ſea to ſea, and from the river to the ends of the earth;" including the moſt barbarous and obſcure inhabitants of the world. "They that dwell in the wilderneſs ſhall bow before him; all ſhall be ſubdued to him," "his enemies ſhall lick the duſt." All rulers and potentates; all diſtant princes ſhall bring him tributes of praiſe and obedience. "His name ſhall endure forever, be continued as long as the ſun, and men ſhall be bleſſed in him; *all nations* ſhall call him bleſſed." It is declared that from a very ſmall beginning, like the confined diſcoveries of redeeming love, then among the Jews, its bleſſings ſhould be, in due time, extended as the graſs of the earth, and the fruit be copious and aſtoniſhing. In metaphor thus expreſſed, "there ſhall be an handful of corn in the earth, upon the top of the mountains; the fruit thereof ſhall ſhake like Lebanon, and they of the city (i. e. the city or people of God, extended all over the world) ſhall flouriſh as the graſs of the earth." Read the whole Pſalm and view the elect head and elect body.

I KNOW, that in all declarations of God's eternal decree, the idea of diſtinction and limitation among the elect body, is kept up: Some ſhall ſooner become acquainted with theſe things, and ſome later: Some in a higher, and ſome in a lower degree; Some

more happily affected than others, and bring forth more fruits of holineſs, and enjoy more conſolation in conſequence thereof. But all theſe diſtinctions and limitations are confined to the preſent world; none reach beyond.

THE Son of man ſaith, "all that the Father hath given me ſhall come unto me, &c." The queſtion is, how many? The anſwer is "He ſhall give thee the heathen for thine inheritance, and the uttermoſt parts of the earth for thy poſſeſſion." i. e. To be in due time ſubdued and conquered, by the king anointed on the holy hill of Zion; and made to ſerve the Lord with fear, and rejoice with trembling, and to kiſs the Son. Here alſo, the idea of the holy and dreadful wrath of God is diſplayed, and the voice of juſtice announcing terrible deſtruction.

I WISH the reader cautiouſly to keep in mind what I have obſerved before; that the whole of divine revelation is every where mixed from beginning to end, law and goſpel ſide by ſide; the voice of juſtice and that of grace; and that the latter, by the ſure decree of heaven, and by the merit and power of the Son of God, is to get the final victory. "Grace ſhall reign through righteouſneſs unto eternal life, by Jeſus Chriſt our Lord."

THIS elect head is fully equal to his great work of ſaving all men, taking away the ſins of the world. As he died, not only for our ſins, who are now diſtinguiſhed from others by an early ſenſe of his grace, and early manifeſtations of his fulneſs; but al-

ſo for the ſins of the whole world. He can and will extend, in due time, his all efficacious offices, and exertions of prophet and king, co-extenſive with his work as a prieſt. He will ſeek and ſave that *loſt thing*. The utmoſt perverſeneſs of human nature will be overcome, until "the earth ſhall be full of the knowledge of the Lord as the waters cover the ſea." This elect head of human nature "ſhall ſtand for an enſign of the people, to it ſhall the Gentiles ſeek, and his reſt ſhall be glorious;" read Iſai. xi.

Again, the elect of God in whom his ſoul delighteth, ſhall manifeſt to all nations the judgment of the law, or juſtice of God, wholly ſatisfied in him. All, that his obedience unto death hath merited, his power and faithfulneſs will apply to the human kind, in the moſt diſtant times and regions. In ſpite of all oppoſition he will not fail nor be diſcouraged, until the moſt diſtant iſlands in the world have bowed to the all commanding power of his grace, the almighty energy of his ſpirit; ſo that they ſhall ſing to the Lord a new ſong, and his praiſe from the end of the earth. The wilderneſs and the cities thereof ſhall lift up their voice; the inhabitants of the rock ſhall ſing, and they ſhall ſhout from the top of the mountains. Read Iſai. xlii. from the beginning to the 16th verſe.

This glorious head and the elect body are *one*, in the predeſtination of God. "I will bring forth a ſeed out of Jacob, (i. e. Chriſt) and out of Judah an inheritor of my moun-

tains, and mine elect (that is, the body of Chriſt) ſhall inherit it, and my ſervants ſhall dwell there." Iſai. lxv. 9. "For thus ſaith the Lord I will extend peace to her like a river, and the glory of the gentiles like a flowing ſtream," it is again ſaid in the prophet "as the days of a tree are the days of my people, and mine elect ſhall long enjoy the work of their hands." "The Lord ſhall be king over all the earth; in that day ſhall there be one Lord and his name one:" i. e. All people ſhall be united in his character. We might compile a volume of citations from the prophets, all of the ſame tenor, as *pure goſpel*; and, at the ſame time ſee many limitations and diſtinctions among mankind, of a *preſent* different character, and the voice of juſtice every where intermixed, and crying aloud for vengeance; but the voice of grace and the blood of Chriſt ſpeaking better things. "Lo the lion of the tribe of Judah, the root and offspring of David hath prevailed."

I could wiſh that every reader might attend to Paul's diſcourſe on the doctrine of election, eſpecially in the ninth, tenth and eleventh chapters of his epiſtle to the Romans. There we find an eternal, fixed plan of Deity, inſuring the final ſalvation of all the *literal*, or *natural* ſeed of Abraham, all the Jews. Yet, in the courſe of this life, in the courſe of time, and God's diſpenſations *on earth*, with that nation, the apoſtle takes notice of as great and ſovereign diſ-

tinctions, as between Jacob and Esau, in temporal matters; and makes the latter an emblem to illustrate the former.

He bewails, from his own former bitter experience, hardness of heart, and enmity against Christ; the miserable case of that nation as a body. They wished themselves at the greatest distance from Christ and all his offered grace, as he once did, or could do, in his blindness and enmity. He could sympathize with them, and greatly pity them, from his own experience. He saw but a very few of them reconciled to their Messiah, or in the knowledge and enjoyment of the benefit; only a remnant possessing the knowledge, sense, and comfort of salvation.

Many more gentiles had come to the knowledge and comfort of eternal salvation than of the Jews; though they were very zealous, and followed after righteousness in their own blind way. They rejected an all-sufficient atonement, and eternal life, on the same footing that any publican might have it, or any poor, scandalous, filthy *dog* of the gentile world. For they gave other nations no better epithet. They did not at all understand how, *in Christ* (the only character that God hath the least respect unto, in the final salvation of all men, or *any* man) every valley was filled, and every mountain and hill made low, and all crooked things straight, and all rough things plain, and the Lord alone exalted: How all boasting was cut off, and God would stain the pride of all glory. These things they did

not understand; therefore they sought salvation by ways of distinction, or as it is expressed by the works of the law." They supposed that they must, some how, be marked different from other men; before, any thing God had ever done, would be a *sure foundation* and a *sole foundation* of their hope.

The apostle tells them that this was a most miserable state of mind to be in, and a most comfortless condition; that they were awfully blind, as to all present knowledge, love, and service of God, or consolation; and that the present temper of their hearts involved in it wickedness, *injustice*, demanding eternal damnation, in their own persons. He labors with the utmost concern, to bring them to know better, to enjoy the comfort of hope, and to love and serve God in consequence of it. Yet he fully asserts that God had *secured*, and, in his own time, would certainly *effect* the final salvation of every Jew that ever had existence. He declares that although their blindness was so awful at present; yet it should not finally prevent their salvation.

After all he says against their most abominable obstinacy, and the doleful effects of it, *in this world*; he asserts that the final salvation of his whole kindred nation, stood on a foundation very different from any thing *in them*, or in *any creature*. "And so all Israel shall be saved: As it is written, there shall come out of Zion a deliverer, and shall turn away ungodliness from Jacob;

For this is my covenant unto them, when I ſhall take away their ſins. As concerning the goſpel, they are enemies for your ſakes;" i. e. they are left in awful blindneſs, *for the preſent*, and will be for a ſeaſon, that the goſpel may have a greater ſpread among you Gentiles, "but, as touching the election, they are beloved for the fathers' ſakes." i. e. Their ſalvation is ſecured in the elect body of Chriſt, together *with*, and as fully *as that* of their fathers, the patriarchs and prophets, who walked ever ſo humbly and uprightly before God, and enjoyed great conſolation: "For the gifts and calling of God are without repentance." Rom. xi. 25.

God never reſted one atom of his eternal plan and fixed purpoſe, on any creature, or any thing that ſhould ever, at any particular time, be found in creatures. They all rather ſubſerve the accompliſhment of it. Indeed, they can by no means fruſtrate "the determinate counſel and foreknowledge of God," in any one inſtance.

God cuts off all mankind, *wholly, in every view*, but in his *own Son*, Jews and Gentiles alike, and there is not the leaſt difference. He concludes, or ſhuts all mankind up together, in total wickedneſs and unbelief; and even in that very predicament, aſcertains their ſalvation, and that of all alike. "For God hath concluded them all in unbelief, that he might have mercy upon all." Rom. xi. 32. This is moſt aſtoniſhing; but, I wiſh men would not cavil about it, and quarrel with it as they do. Let them

rather feel in their hearts, towards the great God and his ſovereign will, wiſdom, and grace, as Paul did; and ſay, with him; "O the depth of the riches, both of the wiſdom and knowledge of God! how unſearchable are his judgments (i. e. decrees) and his ways paſt finding out! For of him, and through him, and to him, are all things: To whom be glory forever, Amen. I wiſh the reader carefully to attend to the Epiſtles to the Romans and Galatians, in particular, although all the writings of Paul, and the whole ſacred ſcripture centre in the ſame great point; *Chriſt, and the ſalvation of his myſtic body.*

In a word; the doctrine of God's election, or eternal, fixed choice, decrees, predeſtination, by what name ſoever you are pleaſed to call it, as it reſpects his grace to the human kind in this world, and their ſalvation in the world to come, ſtands exactly thus, in all the reaſon we are capable of, and in all the ſacred oracles. All is fixed and immutable, in the mind of Jehovah, from eternity to eternity; involving innumerable diſtinctions among men, communities, and nations of men; and, as many in regard to privileges, light, comfort, influence and effect, *in the preſent world;* and great, and innumerable diſtinctions and differences in the life and *world to come*, in regard to *different degrees* of happineſs, dignity, and glory. Yet the divine purpoſe alike ſecures all men *in Chriſt alone;* in his union with, and covenant for human nature,

as a covenant for the people, and Gods ſalvation to the ends of the earth ; and by the exertion of his office of prieſt, prophet, and king, in equal extent with each other. In this way, I ſay, alike ſecures every part of human nature, from any pain or ſorrow in the world to come : And alike ſecures real happineſs and glory to every one, in that proportion of grace, which infinite wiſdom and goodneſs hath appointed.

We now look into the atonement, the ſource of all hope to guilty man. Some have, in late years, imbibed a ſentiment concerning the atonement, exceedingly different from that of the prophets and apoſtles, that of the primitive fathers in the chriſtian church, or that of our chriſtian fathers in later times, ſuch as *Luther*, *Calvin*, *Owen*, *Flavel*, *Watts*, *Hooker*, *Edwards*, and indeed every man in Europe and America, that has paſt under the denomination of a calviniſt, ſince the reformation.

Their idea is, that the atonement is nothing of a vicarious nature. They admit nothing like a ſubſtitute ; nothing like a legal transfer of guilt and righteouſneſs, by divine conſtitution and appointment ; nothing like a bondſman paying for an original debtor ; nothing like a redeemer, under the Jewiſh law, ſtepping into the place of his kinſman, and redeeming by price his forfeited inheritance ; nothing like a good character preſented and accepted, *in law*, in the room and ſtead of a bad one,

&c. &c. But theſe have been uniformly, the ſentiments of thoſe I before mentioned, ſince the chriſtian æra; and the uniform ſenſe of the Jewiſh church, with reſpect to the great atonement pointed out by all the ſacrifices, ſubſtitutes, propitiations, and atonements of that œconomy; and have ever been the invariable ſentiments of all nations of the earth, ſo far as they have made uſe of propitiations and atonements.

THOSE ideas, and indeed, the idea of any proper atonement, or legal transfer of guilt and righteouſneſs, is now wholly diſcarded by ſome. They have, to the great aſtoniſhment of many, boldly aſſerted that all the oblations and ſacrifices of the ancient church, had no direct meaning in them; but that they are a vague and indefinite kind of premonition, that a Meſſiah ſhould, in due time, ſuffer, not however, as an *oblation*, *vicar*, or *ſubſtitute*, for any man. Hence according to them, he did not bear any man's ſins in his own body on the tree, in any direct and proper ſenſe; was not wounded for our tranſgreſſions, or bruiſed for our iniquities; the chaſtiſement of our peace, was not upon him, nor are we healed by his ſtripes: Only as in a mere metaphorical, indirect, and improper ſenſe.

HAVING denied the transfer, and every thing of the nature of a direct and proper imputation, they explain the whole import of Chriſt's obedience unto death, in the following manner. "That God being in his free ſovereign goodneſs, determined to ſave

ſinners, of his own mere mercy, was yet equally determined to vindicate his law, and give the higheſt poſſible teſtimony of his everlaſting approbation of it, to all intelligent creatures. Therefore, with the free conſent of his own Son, brought him under this ſame law, in human nature, and then exacted the whole demand of it. Hereby ſhewing, that God ſo highly eſteemed the law, as to honor it, at the greateſt poſſible expence; and that he was willing to do nothing, but as he would be done by. But in the like predicament, he was willing his Son ſhould ſuffer juſt as his law demands of man: And having given this greateſt demonſtration of the infinite excellency of his law, he now pardons and ſaves whom he pleaſes, of his own ſovereign grace and mere mercy." This they call the atonement; though in full oppoſition to all propriety of language, as will fully appear.

They have no idea of ſetting this atonement to the account of man; or laying the iniquities of men on Chriſt, by any legal tranſfer, or any vicarious covenant of redemption, or any thing like imputations on either ſide. They only ſay, that the door is now wide open for God to ſave ſinners, and fully maintain all the honors of juſtice, and that God now acts, according to the free propenſity of his own nature, in this great affair.

This doctrine, if true, would, at firſt ſight ſhew us that the eternal happineſs of all ſinners is made ſure. For what will not

infinite love (GOD IS LOVE) joined with infinite power do, when there remains not the leaſt claim of juſtice, or any other divine attribute in the way ? We may ſafely abide by what God hath ſo often, and ſo clearly told us ; that nothing but the claim of juſtice can ſtand in the way of our happineſs. All his moral attributes are on the ſide of our happineſs, this only excepted. All his natural attributes are ready to carry into effect all that his infinite grace, mercy, and love point out ; ſaving only that the honor of his law, the copy of his infinite holineſs and juſtice, ſtands in the way.

THAT the moral nature of God is infinite love, is moſt certain : That this love pleads infinitely for ſparing every ſinner from eternal death, he hath often ſaid, and confirmed by ſolemn oath, Ezek. xviii. and through the whole tenor of his word. Now what can any deſire more, to inſure their own ſalvation, than the declaration and oath of God, that his whole diſpoſition is infinitely oppoſed to the final deſtruction of any man : being alſo aſſured, that every attribute of his nature, may appear infinitely glorious and honorable, in the ſalvation of all ; and that infinite, uncontroulable wiſdom and power, are ever ready to accompliſh all the divine will ?

I THEREFORE ſay again, that, if the aforementioned, new notion of the atonement were juſt, the final ſalvation of all mankind would be as ſure, as infinite love and

power can make it; and there would need no more to be said on the subject. But I would not avail myself, at all, of this principle: For it is entirely opposite to all reason, and the whole word of God.

THE TRUE DOCTRINE OF THE ATONEMENT is in very deed this. A *direct*, *true*, and *proper setting all our guilt to the account of Christ, as our federal head and sponsor: And a like placing his obedience unto death, to our account.* In the covenant of redemption and divine constitution, God regards both parties, just as though the Son of man had personally done all, man hath done; and man had done and suffered all that the *second* man hath himself done and suffered. Rom. viii. 3, 4. "For what the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin condemned sin in the flesh: That the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh, but after the spirit." In the atonement, JEHOVAH looked on his Son, in the glass of federal stipulation, in the very character of sinful man, and, *for him a true and proper substitute*, and treated him in justice as such; and took complete satisfaction of him, for all sinful man deserved. This being done, he looks on sinful man in the *true* and *proper character* of his substitute or vicar, even the Son of man, and will be sure to treat him accordingly. The assertion is most astonishing, and far from what man or angels would

ever have thought of, had it not been revealed by God himſelf. This, agreeably to the divine oracles, is a conſtant mark of the truth.

HERE ſome may cry out and ſay, guilt and righteouſneſs is of a perſonal nature, and cannot be transferred. But I now promiſe, that in its proper place, I will fully demonſtrate, that although both theſe are perſonal, they may be transferred, fully according to reaſon and common ſenſe, as well as agreeably to the divine conſtitution. But firſt, I muſt adduce my evidences to ſhew that the ſcripture doctrine of atonement is exactly as I have ſtated.

HERE are four engliſh terms, frequent in the bible, which promiſcuouſly convey the ſame idea, viz. *atonement*, *ranſom*, *propitiation*, and *redemption*. The learned will bear me witneſs, that the ſame original hebrew and greek words, with all their compounds and derivatives, are promiſcuouſly tranſlated by theſe engliſh words, with the derivatives and compounds of the ſame. The ſubſtantives are uſed *ſeventy two* times in the old and new teſtament, in the original, and alſo in the tranſlation. They, every where, either directly import, or fairly allude unto a true and proper transfer, or ſetting the doings or ſufferings of one, to the true and proper account of another; or dealing with one, not in his perſonal character, but in the perſonal character of another, *by him aſſumed*.

I MIGHT fill many folios, ſhould I bring up to view diſtinctly, every paſſage in ſcrip-

ture that is to the purpoſe, and make only a brief comment on each. I ſhall only adduce a few, and leave the reader to add many more, at his leiſure, if he pleaſe. The plain import of all the ſacrifices and oblations, which God appointed by Moſes, firſt meet our view. Their whole meaning centers in the antitype, which all, that pay any regard to revelation, allow to be Chriſt. There is no figure no metaphor in a *type*, any more than in the moſt plain and ſimple propoſition. All types only ſpeak in the moſt direct manner to the *eye*, what the moſt ſimple propoſition does to the eye, if read, or to the ear if pronounced. Our mouths ſpeak words; types ſpeak things more directly, and admit no metaphor.

THE term is firſt uſed, to give us the true and proper idea of a propitiation, ranſom, &c. in Exodus xxi. 30. "If there be laid on him a ſum of money, then he ſhall give for the RANSOM of his life whatſoever is laid upon him." Here the money mentioned, comes directly and properly into the place of the man's life; one or the other muſt be laid down. Again Exodus xxx. 12, 16. "And thou ſhalt take the atonement-money of the children of Iſrael, and ſhalt appoint it for the ſervice of the tabernacle of the congregation; that it may be a memorial unto the children of Iſrael before the LORD, to make an atonement for your ſouls." An atonement is called *atonement-money*, the whole idea of which is negotiable, or tranſferable. In the caſe of the redemp-

tion of an inheritance that has been alienated, the word is often uſed to ſignify a proper price. Levit. xxv. 23, 24, 25. Paul, with the plaineſt alluſion to this chapter, comments upon it, applying it to the redemption by Chriſt. Epheſ. i. 14. "Which is the earneſt of our inheritance, until the redemption of the purchaſed poſſeſſion, unto the praiſe of his glory." How directly is the victim put in the place of Iſaac? See Gen. xxii. No language can poſſibly ſpeak plainer than the type of the two goats, Levit. xvi. The high prieſt killed one goat *for the people;* ſhewing that they all deſerved to die, and that the antitype ſhould indeed die *for them.* Then, by a plain ſignal, with full confeſſion of all their ſins, laid them on the head of the ſcape goat, to be carried away into everlaſting oblivion, as to any puniſhment that ſhould come on them in another world, for their ſins; though the very ſymbol, ſo often repeated, would keep them in perpetual remembrance, for a proper effect on their own minds.

David applies the direct and proper import of all theſe types, to redemption by Chriſt, and makes uſe of the ſame words, Pſalm xlix. 7, 8. "None of them can by any means redeem his brother, nor give to God a ranſom for him: For the redemption of their ſoul is precious, and it ceaſeth forever." Solomon underſtands the ſame term to mean *one thing directly for another*, Prov. xiii. 8. "The ranſom of a man's life are his riches." Read Paul's comment on the

import of all these terms, centering in Christ, Rom. iii. 21. to the end. The apostle here and every where, notices the abundance of grace connected with our justification; and also shews us that there is much more of grace and mercy connected with our justification, by a *true* and *proper imputation*, than could be in any other way, which I shall fully confirm in its proper place.

In the fifth chapter of the epistle to the Romans, Paul considers the atonement in this view: That Jesus paid the whole price for us, or exhibited his own character to God in the room and stead of ours, when we were in our worst state, without repentance, without faith, in all our enmity, and in every view most unworthy: That he did justify us, not as *penitent;* but as *impenitent;* not as *believers*, but as *unbelievers;* for penitence and faith are exercises of a new heart, and godliness; not as *godly*, in the least degree; but as wholly *ungodly*: And then brings the knowledge and comfort of this previous transaction to our souls, by giving us a *heart prepared* to have light and full evidence operate properly upon; also, communicating to us full evidence of what he hath done, so that we receive a *previous atonement*, and "know the things that are freely given us of God."

John tells us, if *any man*, any of the human kind sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous: that they who *at present* are convinced of this, have *present special comfort* in it; but that

the propitiation and the advocate would ſurely extend to all, in *due time*. For he declares that this advocate for any man, "is the propitiation for our ſins, and not for ours only, but alſo for the ſins of the WHOLE WORLD." He alſo declares, that a man muſt have a good and obedient heart given him, in order to take this comfort. "And hereby we do know that we know him, if we keep his commandments." 1. John, ii. 1, 2, 3.

JESUS tells us, Matt. xx. 28. and Mark x. 45. what the end of his death was; "to give his life a ranſom for *many*." He does not, in theſe places, tell us *how many*. The word *many*, may comprehend a *part*, or *all* of the human race. In John i. 29. the extent of the ranſom is declared. "John ſeeth Jeſus coming unto him, and ſaith, Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the SIN OF THE WORLD." Paul underſtands this ranſom for many, to ſignify juſt as many as there ſhall ever exiſt of the human kind, and ſo calls it "*a ranſom for all.*" 1. Tim. ii. 6.

THE ſame apoſtle ſpeaketh of the exceeding comfort reſulting from predeſtination and adoption, as firſt communicated to preſent believers, and equally ſure in God's time, to extend to all the children of men. Epheſ. i. 4,—14. "According as he hath choſen us in him, before the foundation of the world, that we ſhould be holy, and without blame before him in love: Having predeſtinated us unto the adoption of children,

by Jeſus Chriſt to himſelf, according to the good pleaſure of his will, to the praiſe of the glory of his grace, wherein he hath made us accepted in the Beloved: In whom we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveneſs of ſins, according to the riches of his grace; wherein he hath abounded toward us in all wiſdom and prudence, having made known unto us the myſtery of his will, according to his good pleaſure, which he hath purpoſed in himſelf: That in the diſpenſation of the fulneſs of times, he might gather together in one ALL THINGS in Chriſt, both which are in heaven, and which are on earth, even in him: In whom alſo we have obtained an inheritance, being predeſtinated according to the purpoſe of him who worketh all things after the counſel of his own will: That we ſhould be to the praiſe of his glory, who firſt truſted in Chriſt. In whom ye alſo truſted after that ye heard the word of truth, THE GOSPEL OF YOUR SALVATION: in whom alſo, after that ye believed, ye were ſealed with that holy Spirit of promiſe."

THE whole book of divine revelation gives us the ſame idea of the propitiation, atonement, ranſom, redemption; by whatever term is imported our *meritorious* juſtification, aſcertaining our final ſalvation. *Meritorious*, I ſay; for never was there a clearer diſtinction in the word of God, than the three different ſignifications of the term *juſtification*: 1ſt. By the atonement *meritoriouſly*: 2. By faith *inſtrumentally*, for comfort and enjoyment: 3. By works, *declaratively*, or

as evidence of our juſtification. If the reader reads as he ought on ſuch a ſubject, he will certainly have his bible before him: I will therefore only further refer to a few paſſages, which he may conſult and comment upon for himſelf. John i. 29.—iii. 16, 17.—iv. 42.—vi. 33, 51.—viii. 12.—xii. 47.—xvii. 21, 23. Rom. iv. 13. —xi. 12, 15. 2. Cor. v. 18, to the end, compare Pſal. lxiv. 9, with John xii. 32. Epheſ. iii. Titus iv.

In theſe laſt two chapters referred to, the infinite, ſovereign, all conquering grace and power of God appear moſt aſtoniſhing. Here the apoſtle conſiders the whole preaching of the goſpel, and faith wrought in the ſoul, as having no other concern with their glorious objects; but only by comfort in them, and perſonal improvement: Not at all altering God's purpoſe and grace, or Chriſt's merits, or his ſure determination to apply them to ſinners; but only giving them an apprehenſion and ſenſibility of all theſe things, and ſo laying a foundation for meet fruits.

Paul ſpeaks of the whole as completed by God, in Chriſt, and nothing more remaining to be done, but the communication of it to ſinners by regeneration, repentance, faith, and every grace; which are all, wholly the gift of God. "Unto me who am leſs than the leaſt of all ſaints, is this grace given, that I ſhould preach among the Gentiles the unſearchable riches of Chriſt; and to make

all men see, what is the fellowship of the myſtery, which from the beginning of the world, hath been hid in God, who created all things by Jeſus Chriſt." "That Chriſt may dwell in your hearts, *by faith*; that ye being rooted and grounded *in love*, may be able to comprehend with all ſaints what is the breadth and length, and depth, and height; and to *know the love of* Chriſt, which paſſeth knowledge, (i. e. far beyond all that mankind have hitherto conceived, otherwiſe there would be a flat contradiction) that ye may be filled with all the fulneſs of God." Epheſ. iii. "For the grace of God that bringeth ſalvation, hath appeared to *all men*, (i. e, preſents one and the ſame aſpect to all the human kind, and the influence when known is alike on the hearts, and in the lives of all) viz. teaching us that, denying ungodlineſs and worldly luſts, we ſhould live ſoberly, righteouſly, and godly, in this preſent world; looking for that bleſſed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God, and our Saviour Jeſus Chriſt: Who gave himſelf for us, (with as fixed a purpoſe of effectual application, as ever he had of meritorious impetration) that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify to himſelf a peculiar people (ſtanding in ſuch a relation to him, as neither angels, nor any other creatures do) zealous of good works;" i. e. as grace appears, and ſalvation is brought to the ſoul by evidence of faith, a zeal for good works does follow. Alſo thoſe men who, have manifeſtations of this grace

and ſalvation, are diſtinguiſhed from thoſe who are not as yet acquainted with it, "*a peculiar people zealous of good works.*" Titus ii. 11. &c.

It has been often ſaid, that guilt and righteouſneſs being of a perſonal nature cannot be transferred; and that the word of God confirms this, in that it is ſaid, "the ſoul that ſinneth it ſhall die."

It has been with wonder and aſtoniſhment, that I have heard ſome very ſenſible men make this remark. Guilt and righteouſneſs are of a perſonal nature, we all allow; but the conſequence does by no means follow, that they cannot be transferred by order of Jehovah. Nor can there lie one argument againſt ſuch a transfer, but what will lie with equal force againſt any transfer of property, ever made in this world. What gives my neighbor a right to transfer his goods to me for money, or ſome other valuable conſideration? certainly nothing but this, viz. the goods were his property, and the money mine. God gives us the whole warrant and right of contract, transfer, and diſpoſal, and it is the ſame in every caſe. *The diſpoſer muſt be the proprietor*, ſo far as the diſpoſal is made; this will make it warrantable in every caſe in the univerſe, and nothing elſe can. "May I not do what I will with mine own?"

Now a creature cannot be an abſolute proprietor in any thing: This is peculiar to God. Yet creatures have delegated property, within God's limitations. They have

no property in oppoſition to the claim of the Creator; yet they have in oppoſition to the claims of their fellow creatures. Thus, this paper is mine, and not my neighbor's: But I cannot ſay it is mine, and not my Maker's. This applies to all that ever can be called the property of any creature. All our property, all that we are owners of, is ours only, in oppoſition to the claim of our fellow creatures. God is ſtill as much the owner and proprietor of all things, as if he had never given any property to any creature, under any directions or limitations whatever.

I HAVE a right to diſpoſe of my horſe, my labor, my land, &c. and my neighbor has no right to controul me. Yet herein, and in all my conduct, I am bound to obey the will, and attend to the orders of the great, and abſolute Proprietor of all things. Under this limitation, ſo far as any thing is my own, I may transfer or diſpoſe of it as I pleaſe; and ſo may every creature of God, in like manner. Has not God himſelf the ſame right without limitation of a ſuperior? moſt certainly. It is only then to ſhew that God has as real property in all things, moral and natural, temporal and eternal, as I have in the pen I now hold in my hand; and this will prove he has an equal right of diſpoſal, by transfer or any other way. I can eaſily demonſtrate this and much more.

THERE are ſeveral ways, in which mankind acquire property, in the limited ſenſe aforeſaid, or ſuch property as we are capa-

ble of; particularly by discovery and occupancy, by purchase, labor, free gift, &c. In these ways we have a right of disposal and transfer, under the direction of the great and absolute Owner of all things.

But we see in a moment, that no property or right we claim, in any of those ways, is in any measure equal to the right arising from *creation*, or the right of one who gives *whole*, *intire being* to what he claims. God has this right in every thing without possibility of exception; in every existence natural and moral; in all creatures, and in all done by creatures; and in every disposition found in creatures, evil as well as good. All guilt and all righteousness are the absolute property of the great God. He is the origin and fountain of all holiness, goodness, righteousness; "there is none good but one, that is God." As all creatures are his absolute property, so are all their dispositions and actions. Whether good or evil, it alters not the case.

In this view of God, as being the absolute proprietor, and having the sole right of absolute disposal; the devil with all that pertains to him, moral and natural, are as wholly and intirely God's property as Gabriel is. A man may be owner of bad property as well as good, and so may God.

You have two sons in their minority, the one the best, and the other the vilest in the world. They are both alike yours, and at your disposal. One of your hands is wounded and in extreme pain, the other perfectly

well; yet they are both alike your own. You have a flock of ſheep in your paſture, and there is alſo a den of ſerpents on your land, which you bought with all its appurtenances. You are the owner and proprietor of thoſe venemous ſerpents, as much as of your ſheep, and have an equal right to kill them both; the one for the ſupply of your table; the other for the ſake of being out of danger from their poiſon. You have an equal right to transfer them both. Some eminent phyſician may appear, who knows well how he can turn that den of venemous ſerpents to more advantage, and greater good to mankind, than he can all the ſheep you poſſeſs. They are yours; and you may transfer them to him.

So far as man is owner and proprietor of any thing, whether that thing be good or evil, it alters not the right of diſpoſal in the leaſt. If I could exerciſe true benevolence to my fellow men, in healing them, and in furniſhing them with ſure antidotes againſt mortal poiſon, by keeping a den of the moſt deadly ſerpents, under proper reſtraint; I would do it. No man would ſay I did wrong: Or that I was not the proprietor of them, and had no right to transfer them; becauſe they are ſuch evil, hateful creatures. Thus, the MOST HIGH turns his whole cave of devils to good account, and to the greateſt perfection of benevolence, in a ſyſtem replete with love. And ſo he does all the moral evil in the univerſe. He makes uſe of creatures and things of the moral kind, which

are infinitely hateful to him, *in their nature*, to anſwer great and good ends, *in the whole ſyſtem*.

But God never made ſin. Who did? The devil and wicked men. Be it ſo. Yet this devil and all his aſſociates, and all wicked men, are God's property, *abſolutely* and *wholly* ſo; and of conſequence all their doings are equally his property, Sin is a property infinitely hateful in its nature; but it is not therefore the leſs at God's diſpoſal, as his *own property*, by transfer, or any other way he pleaſes. God is an abſolute ſovereign in diſpoſing of it juſt as he pleaſes. "May I not do what I will with mine own?"

On the other hand. As to all righteouſneſs; God is the original fountain of the whole, that ever did, or can exiſt in himſelf, and in all creatures. It is all abſolutely his own property, as much after communication as before. And all the creatures to whom it is communicated, are in like manner his own. All the holineſs found in their temper, character and conduct is ſo in every view; and Chriſt, as mediator and ſavior of the world, is as abſolutely his, as any creature he ever made. "*Chriſt is God's.*"

Now, in the name of reaſon and common ſenſe, what hinders a transfer, if God pleaſes? does he meddle with any thing but his own abſolute property; to which no other Being in the univerſe has any oppoſite claim, any more that I have now a right to claim Godhead, as my own? Shew me, that Jehovah is dealing in ſomething that is not

his abſolute property ; and I will then, and not till then, deny that he hath a right to transfer guilt and righteouſneſs, at his pleaſure.

But if God is ſuch a ſovereign as this comes to, where is the ſafety of creatures ? where is the ſafety of man ? Be patient, kind reader, I will open to you a glorious foundation of ſafety, in its proper place. Take only this hint for the preſent. All the ſafety, hope, and happineſs of man, and of the whole, intelligent ſyſtem, lies in the *nature, moral character, eternal decrees,* and *ſovereign will* of Jehovah alone. But this is a digreſſion, to be reſumed in its proper place.

It is expedient here, that I ſhew what it is that ever induced any man, that hath acknowledged divine revelation, to draw a conſequence ſo palpably erroneous, from a poſition that is very true. "*Guilt and righteouſneſs,* ſay they, *are of a perſonal nature :* Certainly, *therefore, God himſelf has no right to transfer them*" !!! That is to ſay, God has no more property in the moral ſyſtem than I have ! Jehovah has no more right to give law to his creatures, than any one man has to another. The most high has no right to covenant for his creatures, his own abſolute property ; though I have a good right to covenant for my children in many things, and effectually bind them to abide by what I have done.

It is true, a man has no right to covenant for his own children, in matters of a *moral nature,* matters of *guilt* and *righteouſneſs.*

What is the reaſon that he may not do this, as well as in *pecuniary* matters? It is only becauſe God has given him his limits. Man is an abſolute proprietor of nothing. He has a *limited* property, within certain bounds, and that under divine regulation; and thus far he may plead the general warrant of diſpoſal, "*may I not do what I will with my own?*" Beyond this he may not preſume. The ſame may be ſaid of the higheſt angel; but not of God. He is wholly without limitation, with regard to his own abſolute property, in all things *moral*, as well as all things *natural*. And in regard to *righteouſneſs* and *guilt*, they are in all reaſon, and by every dictate of revelation, as abſolutely, and juſtly at his diſpoſal, as a ſparrow, or a ſingle hair of your head.

If any ſhould here ſay, This makes God a guilty being, and his nature like the nature of ſin. The cavil would be worthy of no other anſwer than this; If you own a very wicked ſervant, whoſe temper and conduct is hateful to you every day; you are certainly as wicked as he.

We now conclude, that God may according to reaſon and common ſenſe, tranſfer and impute guilt and righteouſneſs. His word declares abundantly that he hath this right, and that he hath exerciſed it, to the moſt benevolent and glorious purpoſe. This is the grand diſtinguiſhing doctrine of divine revelation, which Paul conſidered as comprehending the whole. *This*, with its glorious

corrections and consequences, claimed his whole attention. "For I determined not to know any thing among you, save Jesus Christ and him crucified." "God forbid that I should glory, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom the world is crucified unto me and I unto the world." "God hath laid upon him the iniquity of us all." "He was wounded for our iniquities, he was bruised for our transgressions, the chastisement of our peace was upon him, and by his stripes we are healed." "Christ our passover is sacrificed for us." "He who knew no sin was made sin for us, that we might be made the righteousness of God in him." "Thou shalt make his soul an offering for sin."

Reason doth most fully warrant or support a salvation by a proper *vicar*, by *substitution*, transfer, imputation of guilt and righteousness. Not a single reason can be offered against it, but what will lie, even with greater apparent force, against your right of transferring one shilling for a supper; or redeeming your own brother out of prison, by the *vicarious transfer* of one pound. Reason, I say, tells us in the clearest, possible manner, that God may so redeem man, if he pleases. But we are wholly indebted to divine revelation, to know that he hath so done. If he hath not there told us so; it is utterly beyond all the power of language ever to communicate that idea. Give up this doctrine, and we may still reckon the bible among good books, and

even call it the beſt on the whole. Yet there will be nothing left, to diſtinguiſh it from the works of Plato, Cicero, Seneca, &c. otherwiſe than as any one good writer may ſomewhat excel another. If all mankind would abuſe *all words* as they do *ſome terms*, who deny that the ſalvation of ſinners is founded on a *proper ſubſtitution;* all uſe and benefit of language would be forever at an end.

THE reaſon why any run ſo wild in this matter, is, becauſe they have not a true knowledge of JEHOVAH. They reaſon about "the poſſeſſor of heaven and earth," who is under no limitation, "and who worketh all things according to the counſel of his own will;" juſt as they would about the conduct of creatures, who have no abſolute property, and are capable of none.

HERE, many have found fault with that moſt clear doctrine of divine revelation, that God conſtituted Adam a fœderal head for all his race; in language like this. "*I was not preſent;*" "*I knew nothing about it;*". "*I did not agree to it;*" therefore it is unjuſt that I ſhould be holden by it." Unthinking man! Do you not ſo far as you have property, make bargains and covenants to bind your heirs and ſucceſſors, and thoſe unborn too? Will you not hold faſt a privilege acquired in a covenant way, by your great grandfather, or any predeceſſor at the diſtance of many generations, and deſcending to you by right of heirſhip? What if your neighbor ſhould come and claim

your farm, and say, this was my grandfather's; and he sold it; and I was not present. I never gave my consent; and I will not be holden by what he did. I will have the farm. Would you not tell him that his predecessor did nothing but what he had a right to do; and bid defiance to his claim?

But God hath a better right to the disposal of all things, *moral* and *natural*, than ever any man had to that of his land. Besides, he covenanted only for his *own children*, his *own offspring*. In this view, all mankind stand in a much nearer relation to the common Parent of all, than ever any child did to an earthly parent. And we can no more dissolve this relation by all our sins, than the wickedness of your son, can make him cease to be *your son*. Moreover, the covenant God made with Adam, was infinitely better than we could have made for ourselves, had we been present; as will abundantly appear in the sequel. However, God had full right to make it, and *confirm it*, and that on both sides too, upon the ground of absolute and universal property.

When you covenant with your neighbor it is proper for you to say, *I will if you will*: I propose, and wait for your consent. Otherwise there can be nothing binding. You make one part of the covenant, your neighbor the other: for you are equals. It is not so with you, and that Being, "of whom, and through whom, and to whom, are all things." He every where makes both parts of the covenant, and would descend infinitely be-

neath his right and dignity if he did not. His language to man is, *I will, and you ſhall*; and never leaves it at the election of man, to comply with his covenant, or refuſe with impunity.

But, ſome have imagined that this idea of juſtification, by a *true* and *proper atonement*, *ſubſtitution*, or *ranſom*, is inconſiſtent with free juſtification by grace, or free ſalvation by mere mercy, ſo often ſpoken of in ſcripture. This is ſo far from being a juſt remark, that I am bold to affirm, that free grace and mere mercy abound to ſinners in this way, more than could be poſſible in any other way. *It is all grace*, diſplayed and communicated to ſinners, *in the moſt gracious way*. Was it not infinite, ſovereign grace and mercy in God that firſt moved in this grand affair? in the Father, to give the Son of his love to ſuffer and die for ſinners, and in the Son to conſent, and undertake? Is not the whole purchaſe, all of mere, ſovereign grace and mercy as it reſpects ſinners, in all their guilt and enmity againſt God? "While we were without ſtrength, in due time, Chriſt died for the *ungodly*." "God commendeth his love, i. e. diſplays it to the very beſt advantage, in that while we were *yet ſinners*, Chriſt died for us." Hence the apoſtle argues the certainty of the application of the ſalvation thus purchaſed for ſinners, while in their *very worſt condition*. Becauſe they were *even then juſtified*, by the blood of Chriſt, before they knew any thing of it; before repentance, or faith, or regene-

ration, or any change in their hearts towards God: Juſtified, I ſay, by Chriſt their ſurety and Redeemer, in the preſence of God, long before they had any knowledge of it by faith; or any comfort in the great work that the ſecond man had finiſhed. What can be plainer than the following words? "Much more then, being now juſtified by his blood, we ſhall be ſaved from wrath through him. For if, *when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God, by the death of his Son;* much more *being reconciled,* we ſhall be ſaved by his life." Rom. v. 8, &c. Thus the atonement is ſo far from any thing inconſiſtent with free grace and mere mercy, that God thereby diſplays and communicates it to the utmoſt advantage, "*commendeth his love.*"

MEN often greatly derogate from the free grace which they beſtow, by the manner in which they communicate it. Your neighbor received from his father, as good an inheritance as you did from yours; and in both caſes, the gift was of mere parental love, or free grace. Whenever he petitioned his father with regard to the expected plantation, he was anſwered with frowns, and kept much in ſuſpenſe, for forty years. His father uſed often to tell him; "Son, I will have you to know, that I will make you ſure of nothing; I will keep you doubtful, and will do as I pleaſe." After forty years, his father, at his death, left him the eſtate; but he might rather thank death for the comfort of his fortune, than his father.

YOUR father gave you juſt as much, of his free grace likewiſe; but in a different mode. When you was twenty two years of age, he called you to him, and with a paternal complacency in his countenance, addreſſed you thus. "My ſon, you are ſenſible God has bleſſed me with a plentiful eſtate, for which I wiſh ever to be thankful. One half of my eſtate is more than I can uſe to any advantage, otherwiſe than to communicate comfort to others. You, my child, are in the bloom of youth, and I wiſh to make you as uſeful and happy as I can, in early life, and all your days; I have therefore given and confirmed to you my houſe in the next ſtreet, and the five hundred acres of land adjoining. The deed was executed laſt year; and that you may have the comfort of your eſtate, and every encouragement and motive to induſtry and uſefulneſs, I now give you the deed, by which I have made the whole ſure to you." Then he gave you the inſtrument under his hand and ſeal, well executed: Adding; "paternal affection is a mighty principle in the human ſoul; I wiſh divine Providence may give you experience of it ere long, in domeſtic connection." You went immediately into the poſſeſſion of your fine eſtate; and have had great comfort in it theſe forty years.

YOUR neighbor is now at laſt, as wealthy as you are; but he has been in doleful ſuſpenſe and anxiety this forty years, often ſurmizing he ſhould die a beggar. He hath not enjoyed the comforts of life as you have;

nor had those encouragements and motives to industry; nor loved his father half so well as you have yours. True, at last, when covered with gray hairs, he has received the same free grace from his father that you have from yours; but in a manner very different. You had a title, by *firm* covenant in early life, founded on *mere grace:* He was kept at *sovereign mercy*, in distressing suspense until he was an old man, and then was made rich by *free grace* likewise. Now, my reader, is there not as much grace in the conduct of your father towards you, as your neighbor has experienced from his father? Was not the manner of communication as gracious, and much more so? Just so, our heavenly Father not only makes us rich by *mere grace;* but in the most *gracious manner*, giving us all possible sense of his infinite good will; and all possible comfort in the enjoyment; and every motive to gratitude and usefulness. And, the exercise of goodness through his own Son, *in fœderal capacity*, doth much enhance and commend this grace.

No person of ingenuity, will cavil at a similitude; because it is not in all respects a resemblance. None are so. If they illustrate the point aimed at, it is enough. The above is intended only to illustrate this truth, viz. Much of mere grace lies in the manner of bestowment.

In the great affair of our justification; though it is legally due *from the Father to the Son*, in consideration of the atonement he

has made; yet the grace connected with it, is, in every view, infinite, and displayed in a manner gracious in the highest degree. It is grace, free, sovereign grace, in the eternal counsels of heaven: All grace in the decree: Grace in the gift, and in the undertaking: Infinite grace in all Christ has done and suffered, as it respects sinners: Sovereign grace in their regeneration, conversion, the gift of repentance, faith, holiness, consolation, perseverance, eternal glory: All grace, free grace, sovereign grace, unsearchable riches of grace, *from God to man*; though the Son hath a claim of righteousness on the Father, and pleads for the *unjust* and the *ungodly*, on the ground of the covenant. From the foundation to the top stone thereof, all is "brought forth with shouting; crying grace! Grace! unto it."

If we attend to the threefold office of our Savior, as *Priest*, *King*, and *Prophet*; we shall find the final salvation of every human creature made sure in him.

That Christ doth sustain these three distinct offices, as our Redeemer, I suppose, none will deny; since he is expressly designated by each of these appellations, in sacred scripture, in a great many places; and since kings, priests, and prophets, as types of Christ, speak of his doings and sufferings as their own. "They pierced my hands and my feet." "They shall look on *me* whom they have pierced, and shall mourn

for *him.*" "A prieſt forever, after the order of Melchiſedec." "Give thy judgments to the King." "A King ſhall reign in right-couſneſs." "King of Kings." But I ſuppoſe it wholly needleſs to adduce proof of this matter, and would only exhibit the demonſtration ariſing from the character of Chriſt, as *prophet, prieſt,* and *king.* It is manifeſt that *all theſe offices are equal,* as to their extent and operation. Chriſt is juſt as far, and as extenſively a King over mankind, as he is a Prieſt and a Prophet; and as far as he doth exerciſe theſe offices at all, among the human kind, he doth exerciſe, and engage to exerciſe them all unto perfection.

Now, it is univerſally allowed that Chriſt is a Prophet, Prieſt and King, in ſome reſpect, and in ſome degree, to *all* mankind: that the world enjoys many common favors through his atonement, and government of the world; and that all the light, knowledge, and inſtruction mankind enjoy, is through him, as his gift. But then, the *limitarians* would make one office of Chriſt, much leſs extenſive than another. "His atonement, ſay they, is abundantly ſufficient for all. As a Prieſt, he wears an equal aſpect to all, preſenting his infinite atonement to every man alike. As a King, he governs and will govern all creatures, by his almighty power, with uncontrouled effect, according to his own will; either to make them dutiful ſubjects, or to puniſh them as rebels. He will diſpoſe of all men,

and all things with an irreſiſtible arm; ſaving only, that the moral diſpoſitions of moſt of the children of men ſhall be exempt from his kingly government, and remain unconquered. He will ſubdue *ſome things*, but not *all things*, to himſelf. He will make *ſome knees* to bow, but not *every knee*. He will bring down *ſome high thoughts*, but not *every high thought*." Thus they extend the *ſacerdotal* far beyond the *regal* office of Chriſt.

As to his *prophetic* office, they reſtrain and limit that very much indeed. They allow that he gives common light and knowledge to mankind in general; but not that ſaving light which is, by way of diſtinction, called the *true light*. They allow that he is the *common light*, but *not* the "*true light*, that lighteth every man that cometh into the world." They will make a great diſtinction, or limitation, where the inſpired Evangeliſt makes none at all. They will not allow that "in him was life; and the life was the light of men," without a word of limitation. John i. 4. But make the three offices of Chriſt aforementioned, quite unequal, as to their extent and efficacy.

PAUL repreſents the offices of Chriſt as co-extenſive. Effectual calling is by virtue of the prophetic and kingly office of Chriſt: Juſtification pertains to the ſacerdotal, or prieſtly office, by the atonement: The ſanctification, perſeverance, and glorification of ſinners, reſult from all the offices of Chriſt alike. This apoſtle tells us that where one of theſe offices is exerciſed, the other two are,

in every inſtance. Rom. viii. "Whom he did predeſtinate, them he alſo called: and whom he called, them he alſo juſtified: and whom he juſtified, them he alſo glorified. What ſhall we then ſay to theſe things? If God be for us, who can be againſt us? He that ſpared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us ALL, how ſhall he not with him alſo freely give us all things?" - - - - - - "For I am perſuaded that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things preſent, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, ſhall be able to ſeparate us from the love of God which is in Chriſt Jeſus our Lord." As to the extent of this love, we are left at no loſs, being told that "God ſo loved *the world*, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whoſoever believeth in him ſhould not periſh, but have everlaſting life." If you would know how many ſhall believe and be ſaved, Jeſus tells you in the next words: "For God ſent not his Son into *the world* to condemn *the world*, but that *the world* through him might be ſaved. John iii. 16, 17. Would you know how far the light of Chriſt, and his prophetic office to mankind, ſhall finally extend, ſee John i. 7. "The ſame came for a witneſs, to bear witneſs of the light, that *all men* through him might *believe*:" The ſame is affirmed John xvii. 21. "That *the world* may believe that thou haſt ſent me."

I HAVE before ſhewn that the eternal de-

cree of JEHOVAH, the firm predeſtination of heaven, or the infinitely merciful election of God, as it reſpects mankind after death, comprehends all alike.

IT appears that "the head of *every man* is Chriſt," 1. Cor. xi. 3. and that in the covenant of redemption, all mankind were given to the *Second Adam*, as they were once included in the *Firſt*; that he undertook to redeem them by *price*, by *power*, and by *application* of the atonement he engaged to make; and which, in the fulneſs of time, he did make: That nothing can reſiſt his power as King eternal, immortal, inviſible: That our whole ſalvation is committed to him, in every view, and in every part of it, as *Alpha* and *Omega*, the beginning and the ending, the firſt and the laſt: That "other foundation can no man lay than that which is laid, which is Jeſus Chriſt:" That he is of one mind, and who can turn him? and what his ſoul deſireth, that he doeth: That of him, and through him, and to him, are all things: That he hath placed himſelf on the mountain of his holineſs and ſtrength, and that, in his own time, he will take away the veil of darkneſs, and covering of ignorance, that hath been ſpread over all the nations of the earth; and will ſhew them that death, *ſpiritual* and *eternal*, is ſwallowed up in victory; and exhibit the goſpel feaſt of joy and glory to all the world.

THUS, as on a glorious and holy mountain, doth he take his ſtation, and, in divine majeſty and love, proclaim aloud, ſaying,

"In this mountain, ſhall the Lord of hoſts make unto *all people* a feaſt of fat things, a feaſt of wines on the lees, of fat things full of marrow, of wines on the lees well refined; and he will deſtroy, in this mountain, the face of the covering caſt over all people, and the veil that is ſpread over all nations. He will ſwallow up death in victory; and the Lord God will wipe away tears from off *all faces*; and the rebuke of his people ſhall he take away, from off *all the earth*: for the Lord hath ſpoken it. And it ſhall be ſaid in that day, lo, this is our God, we have waited for him, and he will ſave us; this is the Lord; we have waited for him; we will be glad and rejoice in his ſalvation; for in this mountain ſhall the hand of the Lord reſt." Iſai. xxv. 6, &c. This well agrees with what has been ſaid of the progreſſive manifeſtations of grace and ſalvation to men. Infinite wiſdom hath ſeen beſt to keep a veil and a covering over all nations, in a greater or leſs degree; and to draw it aſide a little, by ſlow gradations, until the glorious removal of it, in full diſplay, on the mountain of the Lord.

THE certain ſalvation of the human kind, may be argued from the doctrine of repentance, as preached by Chriſt and his apoſtles.

ALL will allow that repentance is certainly connected with pardon and ſalvation. Now, wherein does this certain connection conſiſt? Does it merit pardon? No: Does it at all change the eternal, immoveable purpoſe of

God ? No : Does repentance ſave us, as a meritorious good work, or good diſpoſition in the ſoul ? No : How then is repentance ſurely connected with pardon and life ? As God's ordinance, and as a fit temper of mind; without which, in the very nature of things, pardon and heaven itſelf could be no bleſſing. This is, indeed, the true anſwer.

Now, who gives repentance to ſinners ? Who makes this goſpel qualification ſure to them, before they go to heaven ? Does it depend in the leaſt on themſelves ? So far from this, their whole ſouls oppoſe it with all their might. Can any creature give it to another ? No : Do ſinners ever before they are penitent, do any thing to render it reaſonable that God ſhould give to them repentance rather than to others ? No. Repentance is a free, ſovereign gift of God in Chriſt, who will have mercy on whom he will have mercy, for his own name's ſake, and for his own praiſe. And Jeſus is exalted to grant this grace, juſt as much as the remiſſion of ſins, in conſequence of it. He gives the former, only as the neceſſary channel, or medium by which pardon and ſalvation can come to the ſoul. The gift of this grace is juſt as much within his commiſſion, as *Mediator* and *Savior* of the world, Savior of all men, as is the beſtowment of pardon and heaven. " Him hath God exalted, with his right hand, to be a Prince and a Savior, for to give repentance to *Iſrael*, (all are *ſo*, in union with Chriſt, by human

nature, and by covenant) and forgiveneſs of ſins." Acts v. 31.

The prayer of Chriſt is efficacious. "Him the Father heareth alway." He has prayed for the pardon of thoſe that you would exclude, if you exclude any of the human kind; even *Judas*, and *Pilate*, and *Herod*, and the malicious chief Prieſts, and murderous, bloody band of ſoldiers, and all that mocked and derided him, on the day when he finiſhed the great work. For all theſe he ſurely poured out an effectual, fervent prayer; "Father forgive them, for they know not what they do." In this prayer which the Father certainly heard, (as he does alway without a ſingle exception) Jeſus comprehended every ſinner in the world; for every ſin doth crucify the Son of God. By this, and his other effectual interceſſions, he enſured the promiſed grace, to take hold of their hearts in his own time. "They ſhall look on him whom they have pierced and mourn."

The gift of repentance as well as of faith, and every other grace, is only that the ſure pardon and ſalvation may be known and *enjoyed* by the ſoul, in God's choſen way, and in the only *proper*, or even *poſſible* way. Thus, as *peculiar to the goſpel*, all men every where are commanded to repent. Acts xvii. 30. "And the times of this ignorance God winked at; but now COMMANDETH ALL MEN EVERY WHERE to repent." Repentance is preached for the remiſſion of ſins, which remiſſion was made as certain before as after-

ward. It was by the atonement of Chriſt aſcertained, *in itſelf*; but by way of repentance it is made ſenſible to ſinners.

CERTAINLY; repentance, *as an exerciſe* in the human ſoul, does not create its own object, or lay its own foundation, any more than faith does, or love, or hope, or joy, or any grace whatever. They all agree in this, that they are all built on a firm foundation which they had no hand in laying. This foundation of God ſtandeth as ſure, when theſe graces are not in exerciſe, as when they are, and before their implantation as after their utmoſt perfection. The foundation of God hath the ſeal, *not of alterations in creatures*, but of his own eternal decree, and his knowledge of our ſalvation founded thereon. Let the mind of man, *at preſent*, be in what ſtate it may, "nevertheleſs the foundation of God ſtandeth ſure, having this ſeal, the Lord knoweth them that are his."

WHEN all men are commanded every where to repent, no doubt, ſaving, evangelical repentance, is the thing commanded, and this, we know, is the exerciſe of a new heart, and implies union with Chriſt by regeneration, or a new creation in him. The very command implies, that this is made ſure, and all the benefits connected with it, as what Chriſt has laid a foundation for. The doctrine preached is only a piece of good news, founded in *truth* and *certainty*, as all other goſpel doctrines are. The doctrine is an object of faith, as all other goſpel doc-

trines are. It has a reasonable duty connected with it; which is common to all gospel doctrines.

When the doctrine of repentance is preached for the remission of sins, this remission is always considered as sure in Christ. Repentance as a fit temper of mind to receive it and enjoy the benefit, is also engaged by him, who orders the doctrine to be preached. Christ considers all nations of the earth, and every human creature as reconciled to God, by his blood, and God to them. What remains, in the preaching of the gospel, is that they be brought to the knowledge, sense, and enjoyment of it, that it may have proper influence on their hearts.

Before Peter thus understood the matter, he had an objection against preaching the doctrines of faith, repentance, and salvation to the gentiles. He had no idea they had any right, *secured in Christ*, to these favors; therefore he had no news of that kind to tell them. His objection would have been founded in all the reason in the world, had the position been true, that the gentiles were *not cleansed in Christ*, and reconciled to God *by him*, and God to them. Had this been the case, Peter ought not to have preached to them the gospel of repentance and reconciliation. But Christ tells him, that his fundamental principle in this matter was not true, forbidding him to assert it again; "What God hath cleansed that call not thou common;" i. e. *unclean*, or *unsanctified* in Christ; or unaccepted of God, *in him*. See

the vifion of the fheet and its explanation, Acts x. and xi.

HENCE it appears that all mankind, "even *while enemies*, are *reconciled* to God, by the death of his Son, and much more, *being reconciled*, fhall be faved by his life:" i. e. becaufe he lives at the Father's right hand, to make effectual application of his atonement, which he does by fending his Spirit into the hearts of men, to renew them; and by conveying to them in his own time, the doctrines of repentance, faith, and every grace and virtue; and making thefe doctrines take effect. We are after reconciliation faved by his life, *much more*, i. e. moft evidently and certainly, as he lives an almighty and faithful Savior, exalted with God's right hand, a Prince and Savior, to make *application* of the benefits of redemption, to give repentance to his redeemed (called his Ifrael) and forgivenefs of fins.

REGENERATION, repentance, faith, love, hope, joy, every virtue, and every good work wrought in us, or exercifed by us, all agree in this, viz. They are all fo many fit and neceffary fteps, which the almighty Redeemer takes with human fouls, to acquaint them with his meritorious impetration, give them comfort in it, and affect them fuitably by it in their hearts and lives. There is no ftrict propriety in preaching any of thefe doctrines *as gofpel*, i. e. as news founded in facts, that ought to be believed; unlefs all is made true and fure in Chrift before we have any acquaintance with the tidings, or

any operation from them. The whole preaching of the gospel, in every article of it, is only the announcing of immutable truth, not created or altered by our hearing of it. Which truth it is good for us to know, and hath a good effect and consequence.

In hearing the doctrine of repentance, we learn the nature of it; the good effect of it in our great comfort and usefulness; the meet fruits of it, which are all very good; and also that Christ is exalted by God's right hand, to give it to the world, whose sins he died to take away. Thus the pardon comes, to their conviction and comfort, by the doctrine of repentance for the remission of sins.

They who would make repentance, faith, regeneration, or any other grace, means necessary to our salvation, say right. But they who make them terms of distinction *in us*, to give us a sure title to salvation, put our safety now on the same footing or ground, on which Adam stood at first, as to the general nature and reason of it. Adam must have had a good heart and a good life, and then he would have been safe; yet *all* would have been *of God's grace*, or free gift, as every body will allow: For his whole being was so. Now, say they, we must have *good, penitent, believing, holy hearts*, in a good degree, *all of God's grace*, and then we have a title to his favor, and not otherwise. We need not be quite so good as Adam must have been; but our safety stands on the

ſame general ground, and in a good degree too. The degree alters not the nature or ground of our ſafety: The general reaſon is wholly the ſame. Both ſtand on perſonal qualifications.

But the truth is, Adam ſtood wholly on his perſonal qualifications: We ſtand wholly on thoſe of Chriſt; and enjoy the comfort and operation of them, by regeneration, faith, repentance, and every virtue. To ſuppoſe otherwiſe, is, at beſt, falling into the *neonomian* ſcheme. The retainers of which, ſay, that the terms of our acceptance with God, are much lowered ſince the fall of Adam, the conditions much mitigated; but that we ſtand upon perſonal qualifications, ſuch as they be, *in the goſpel demand*, as much as Adam did, on the higher qualifications of the firſt covenant.

Any impartial mind, with proper attention, will ſee, that we fall into the ſelf ſame doctrine, as to the general and real nature of it, if we inſiſt on any kind or degree of qualifications in creatures, as *terms* of acceptance with God; or, otherwiſe than as the work of God's almighty power, and free grace in us, in order to give us the knowledge of our previous acceptance with God in Chriſt alone; and to form and attemper our ſouls to the enjoyment of life and eternal ſalvation, made ſure by the covenant of redemption, and the faithful engagement of the Son of God, and ſealed on his croſs. If we depart from this plan of hope, it is indifferent whether we call ourſelves *papiſts*

or *proteſtants, arminians* or *calviniſts, neonomians, antinomians, new divinity men,* or *quakers;* inaſmuch as we ſhall all agree in the grand principle, the cardinal point: viz. *That our acceptance with God, and our certain ſalvation, does reſt on valuable qualifications, whereby we are diſtinguiſhed from other men.* Yet all agreeing in this, even that God by his mere mercy and free grace, hath made the ſaving diſtinction. Thus we all, in our hearts, join with him of old in pleaſing devotion; "God I thank thee that I am not as other men." He acknowledged the free grace of God, as much as any *limitarian* ever did.

It is a further ſymptom that the way of life I am pleading for, is agreeable to the goſpel; that believing in it will certainly make us hate all ſin, all ungodlineſs. Or to ſpeak with more accurate propriety, where this faith is, there certainly will be a bitter hatred and averſion to all ungodlineſs. The very diſcovery of God which I am ſpeaking of, that view of the Redeemer, that exhibition of the divine character, neceſſarily involves in it a perception and ſenſe of infinite amiableneſs, beauty and glory. The infinite lovelineſs of God, and ſalvation by grace through Jeſus Chriſt, are the eſſential objects of the faith I maintain. This wholly agrees with the old calviniſtic doctrine of ſaving faith. No acquaintance with God or divine truth, without a feeling impreſſion of the divine lovelineſs on our ſouls, was ever

thought to be saving faith, by *Calvin, Owen*, or any eminent promoters of the protestant cause. Their object of faith is exactly the same which I contend for; and the manner of communication and operation is the same, as wrought by the power of God, working by love, and purifying the heart, even as God is pure.

We do not consider assurance of our salvation to be of the essence of saving faith; but merely consequential, even as hath been usual with protestants. The faith we contend for, has nothing immediately and directly to do with ourselves, but with the object of our faith. When this faith is wrought in us, by the power and grace of God, and proper fruits ensue; thence we argue our own safe estate by way of consequence, and so make our calling and election sure. We unite with the orthodox in all ages, in saying, that hatred of all sin is the fruit of faith; or that saving knowledge and supreme love of God are through faith.

The universal extent of Christ's saving power and grace, is further taught us by metaphors and emblems, which the divine Spirit hath made use of in the word. As that of the *dew*, the *wind*, the *rain*, &c. which are known to be of universal extent over the whole earth, at such various times and in such manner as God is pleased to direct. Perhaps no emblem is more significant than that of a *sun*, often made use of in the scriptures, as Psalm lxxxiv. 11. "For

the Lord God is a ſun and a ſhield: the Lord will give grace and glory: no good thing will he withhold from them that walk uprightly." Mal. iv. 2. and in other places.

SIMILITUDES do not quadrate in all reſpects with the things illuſtrated by them; but wherein they do, we may argue with ſafety. Take the ſimilitudes now referred to, and we ſhall find univerſal extent and operation, to be principal ideas ſuggeſted. A comment might be made on each of them, perhaps, with equal propriety. Omitting the reſt, take that of *a ſun*. It very well preſents to our view the Sun of righteouſneſs, the great Redeemer, in the extent, and benign efficacy of his mediatorial character.

THE ſun is an object highly exalted above the world: So is Chriſt highly exalted. The ſun is the fountain of light to the world: So is Chriſt the brightneſs of his Father's glory and the expreſs image of his perſon. The natural ſun revives, quickens, gives life to all things in the natural world: So doth Chriſt with regard to the whole ſpiritual world. The ſun hath various times and ſeaſons of ſpecial influence, and does diſpenſe his favors variouſly to various parts of the world, at different times, ſeaſons, and periods: So it is with the Sun of righteouſneſs, in the ſpiritual world. Under the influence of the ſun in the firmament, there is the vernal and the autumnal ſeaſon, the ſummer and the winter, the darkneſs and the light, in various degrees, and the heat and cold in perpetual variation: So it is with

the various diſplays and diſpenſations of the great Redeemer, the Sun of righteouſneſs. Something of this has been taken notice of before in the gradual progreſſion of goſpel light; and in the decrees of God, making many and great diſtinctions among mankind in this world, both of an outward and of a ſpiritual nature, and alſo in the world to come, with reſpect to degrees of exaltation and glory; though none as to the certainty of future ſalvation, to the body of Chriſt, who is the "head of every man."

The natural ſun is certainly and greatly beneficial to the whole world; though not to every part in the ſame manner and degree. The frigid zones ſeem leaſt of all to feel the bleſſings of that glorious luminary; though they have their day, and a long one, and many other benefits derived from the ſun. The torrid zone is, on the whole, favored far beyond thoſe laſt mentioned, in many reſpects; yet the inhabitants of thoſe climates have not near ſo many benefits from the ſun as the regions included in the temperate zones. Moreover, each of thoſe parts of the earth, is more bleſſed with the benign influences of the ſun at one time than at another; and all of them more in the day time than in the night; more in the ſerene and clear day than in the dark and gloomy day. Many other remarks of this kind, will naturally occur to the mind of the reader.

It is to be obſerved, in general, that there is no ſeaſon of the year, no period of

time, no hour in the ſtormy day, or midnight darkneſs, in which any part of the world is left wholly without any benefit, or even conſiderable benefit from the ſun. Even in dead of winter, the ſun is a great bleſſing to men: So even at the darkeſt or coldeſt midnight, it is neither ſo dark nor ſo cold as it would be if there were no ſun. When any particular climate ſuffers moſt in the abſence of the ſun, yet the inhabitants of that particular climate, have ſuch a connection with the world in general, and with thoſe parts of the world where, at the ſame time, the influence of the ſun is moſt replete with bleſſings, that they receive great benefit, though in a mediate and direct way. Each part of the world has at ſome times, the immediate and direct beams of the ſun; at other times his indirect and reflected influence, by the moon and ſtars. And, even when theſe appear not, ſtill many and great benefits are derived to them; without which they would be far more miſerable than they ever yet were, in their moſt torpid or benighted circumſtances. They always have ſome "*precious things brought forth by the ſun.*" Juſt ſo with regard to the "true light which enlighteneth every man that cometh into the world." The Lord is good to all; and his tender mercies are over all his works. All the human kind are at all times much the better for Chriſt. He hath always a deſire to the work of his hands.

The covenant people of God, under every diſpenſation, may be compared to thoſe cli-

mates and regions moſt peculiarly under the bleſſings of the natural ſun. Different diſpenſations among them compare with different ſeaſons of the year. Special providences, propitious or adverſe, are like the interchange of calm ſunſhine and angry ſtorms. The firſt openings of divine revelation are ſimilar to the firſt ſtreaks of dawning day: Increaſing light is like the gray of the morning. The jewiſh diſpenſation was, at firſt, like the horizontal beams of the riſing ſun. As light was added, under that diſpenſation, the ſun advanced towards the meridian. Chriſt and the inſpired apoſtles, with the light at that time poured in upon the world, may compare with the ſun in his ſtrength. "His countenance was as the ſun ſhineth in his ſtrength." "I am come a light into the world." And "ye are the light of the world." There is much in ſacred writ to ſupport this analogy.

As it is demonſtrated concerning the ſun in the firmament, that his influence is more intenſe ſome time after the meridian is paſt, than before; ſo the bleſſings of the great Redeemer have been increaſing, ſince he was on earth in the form of man, ſince "he aſcended up on high, led captivity captive, and received gifts for men; *yea for the* REBELLIOUS *alſo*, that the Lord God might dwell among them." Pſalm lxviii. 18.

EVERY part of the pagan world, all nations of the earth unacquainted with divine revelation directly or immediately, have indirectly ſomething valuable of the ſame

light and knowledge, in various degrees and meaſures, by connection with the people of God, more or leſs, by tradition, communication, &c. Even as every part of the earth, has always, both in winter and ſummer, in every ſeaſon of the year, by day and by night, ſome benefit more or leſs from the ſun; if not by his direct beams, yet by the reflected or refracted. There are no people in the world, but what have ſome religion. Yet probably there never would have been any in the world, had there been no revelation from God. Yea, perhaps, the exiſtence of a God would never have been thought of, had he made no ſort of revelation more than in the works of nature and providence. It has been the opinion of ſome of the greateſt of men, that the firſt intimation of a Supreme Being, was owing to divine revelation: Although, when the hint was thus given, the nations of the earth, with this leading thought, could demonſtrate his exiſtence from the works of nature. However this may be, there is no nation on earth, which is not enlightened by Chriſt, in ſome degree or other, by his word, ſpirit and providence, in ſuch manner as infinite wiſdom and goodneſs hath ſeen beſt. In this ſenſe is the apoſtle to be underſtood, when he ſays, "the goſpel was preached to every creature under heaven." For this never had been done by expreſs revelation, or direct communication of the knowledge of Chriſt.

All mankind have ſome religion, which

came to them through Chriſt; though many have never heard of his name. All people know the truth, in ſome degree. All are orthodox in ſome points, and right in ſome meaſure. God manifeſts himſelf, and gives knowledge and inſtruction of all kinds, to the inhabitants of this world, and indeed to all intelligent creatures, only in and through Chriſt. All common ſenſe, all extraordinary endowments of mind, all ſcience and learning, all new inventions of every kind, all acquaintance with moral and ſpiritual things, are by Chriſt. Hence he is called the word of God; becauſe as men convey knowledge and inſtruction by their words, ſo doth God by the Mediator.

When man fell, he was then immediately in total darkneſs, as to any impreſſions on his mind, or mental exerciſes that might profit him. The mediation of Chriſt began that very moment. The guilty pair were immediately put in better circumſtances, by the Son of God, than otherwiſe they would have been. And it is the general opinion of divines, I think, with good reaſon, that they were ſoon regenerated and brought back to the ſaving knowledge of God, in a way of ſpecial illumination, repentance, and faith. There was, however, a bleſſed degree of the power and influence of the Mediator on their minds, immediately after their fall; and there ever has been on the minds and diſpoſitions of all their children. None have ever been nearly ſo bad, as if there had been no Mediator. Common grace, as we term

it, having always been an unſpeakable favor to all the fallen race. And this is as truly and really by and through Chriſt, as eternal ſalvation is.

The influence of the Second Adam, the Lord from heaven, on the hearts of men, has always been ſovereign, and very various; as much ſo as the light and influence of the ſun on the earth has been in the various parts of it, and in the various ſeaſons of the year: Yet all are much the better for the Sun of righteouſneſs. It is a univerſal propoſition and every where true, that "the people that walked in darkneſs have ſeen a great light;" i. e. with a viſion more or leſs perfect; with ſome degree of illumination; "and they that dwell in the land of the ſhadow of death, upon them hath the light ſhined." So in Iſaiah li. when God ſpeaks of his fixed determination to ſave ſinners, his eſtabliſhed purpoſe and judgment in that matter, he ſaith, "I will make my judgment to reſt for a light to the people, my righteouſneſs is near, my ſalvation is gone forth, and mine arms ſhall judge the people. The iſles ſhall wait upon me, and on mine arms ſhall they truſt." "My ſalvation ſhall be forever: and my righteouſneſs ſhall not be aboliſhed." "My righteouſneſs ſhall be forever, and my ſalvation from generation to generation."

The Most High ſpeaks of the light of Chriſt, as a growing and ſpreading light, until, in the end, all the world ſhall behold his glorious beams, and feel his ſaving

power. Iſaiah lx. "Ariſe ſhine; for thy light is come, and the glory of the Lord is riſen upon thee." "And the gentiles ſhall come to thy light, and kings to the brightneſs of thy riſing." "The abundance of the ſea ſhall be converted unto thee; the forces of the gentiles ſhall come unto thee." "Who are theſe that fly as a cloud, and as the doves to their windows? Surely the iſles ſhall wait for me, and the ſhips of Tarſhiſh firſt, to bring thy ſons from far." And it is obſervable, as God is ſpeaking of his covenant mercies in Chriſt to the ends of the earth, it is ſubjoined towards the cloſe of the chapter, "Thy SUN ſhall no more go down, neither ſhall thy moon withdraw itſelf: for the Lord ſhall be thine everlaſting light, and the days of thy mourning ſhall be ended." And to the ſame purpoſe it is ſaid, "The earth ſhall be filled with the knowledge of the Lord, as the waters cover the ſea."

IN all this proviſion, and diffuſion of ſaving light and grace to men, God is as free and ſovereign as in creating the ſun in the firmament, and in diſpoſing of all his benefits. And as "he maketh his ſun to riſe on the evil and on the good," ſo likewiſe hath he no regard to any diſtinction ſeen in the human kind, in the beſtowment of ſaving mercy. Many differences is he pleaſed to make in this world, and that as becometh his holy ſovereignty; but none, *none at all*, as to the final extent of ſalvation, or the efficacy of the Sun of righteouſneſs.

THE DOCTRINE OF THE TOTAL DEPRAVITY OF HUMAN NATURE, is so plain a scripture doctrine, that we cannot deny it, without rejecting the whole authority of divine revelation.

THE doctrine is this: That the whole human nature, included in the first man, was, by the fall, left totally destitute of any moral or spiritual good; and that fallen man became as bad in a moral view, as fallen angels, at their first apostacy, according to their inferior natural capacity.

THE angels who had fallen sometime before man, had increased their wickedness, by the exercises of it; and man was in the like sure way to increase his, and by the same cause. Every power, every faculty of the soul, was left without any, the least degree of moral good; all dreadfully polluted; "every imagination of the thought of man's heart was evil only, and that continually." The depravity was total. And there was nothing left in the soul of man, of a moral kind, but enmity against God. I should here take up the demonstration of this at large, were it not so fully done already, by the most able divines, in a way of the plainest scripture reasoning.

I HAVE said, and I here repeat it, the mediation of Christ, in favor of all human nature, began the moment after the fall. In Adam and Eve was all human nature included, or, in Adam alone: For the woman was from him. Christ, by his merciful energy, began immediately to with-

ſtand the force of man's depravity, and has done ſo ever ſince, in a greater or leſs degree, in all human nature, in every child of Adam. Otherwiſe, mankind would all be as bad as the devils, according to their meaſure of being; but we know they are not. The Mediator was a ſovereign in the meaſure of good influence he granted at firſt to the fallen pair, and in all additional meaſures of grace of what kind ſoever; and is ſo ſtill, and always will be, as it highly becomes his character always, and in every thing, to keep up a view of his holy ſovereignty. At what time he regenerated the ſouls of our firſt parents, we cannot ſay, or what meaſures of grace he was pleaſed to give them while they lived.

He now gives unto ſome, much more of his kind influence from their infancy, than others; and to ſome increaſing favors of this kind, all their days. Some have leſs and leſs of it all their days, and ſo grow worſe and worſe. But none, in this life, are ever found without ſome degree of grace or favor from the Mediator; ſuch as preventing goodneſs, reſtraining grace, ſome checks of conſcience, ſome humanity and kindneſs to their fellow men. Be it granted that all this is from merely ſelfiſh motives, and deſtitute of all moral good, and that there is ſin worthy of damnation, in regard to deficiency, in all their honor and honeſty, in all their induſtry and the public good they do, and in all the benefits they communicate.

Grant all this, which indeed is true ; yet there is much of the grace of the Mediator in hindering their being and doing worſe. Chriſt, by his providence and ſpirit, mercifully and powerfully reſiſts the awful force of their depravity, at all times, even though he has not yet renewed them in a ſaving manner.

To illuſtrate the above remarks. God ſays to Abimelech, " I with-held thee from ſinning againſt me." Though he was guilty of great ſin in all he did, even in diſmiſſing the wife of the patriarch, not doing even that in faith and from a principle of friendſhip to God ; yet a bleſſed degree of God's grace was granted him. God in his providence, and, it ſhould ſeem, by ſome ſpecial influence on his mind and inclinations, kept him from a great ſin. There never was any man on earth left to the whole force of his natural depravity : No, not Cain, or Ahab, or Jezebel, or Judas himſelf. If otherwiſe, Cain would have killed his parents as well as his brother ; Ahab would have murdered many beſides Naboth, thouſands more than ever he did. Jezebel's whoredoms and witchcrafts were many ; but they would have been many more, had not the Mediator's grace reſiſted. And, were it not for this grace, Judas would have been a much greater thief and murderer than he was. It was this that made him repent, and bear his laſt teſtimony in favor of the Redeemer. And even this good almighty government of Chriſt ſo ordered, that he hanged himſelf,

before he had further added to his wickedneſs ; though this was done by the inſtrumentality of ſatan, as the immediate agent.

The reader may now want I ſhould ſhew, if I can, that Judas did not go to an eternal hell. I will take notice of this, in its proper place, and ſo of every thing elſe that he may think of, as he goes along, as impatient to have at that moment diſcuſſed.

But, not to digreſs further, I would add concerning the grace which the Mediator afforded even Judas, in his higheſt pitch of wickedneſs. Had it not been for the gracious, reſiſting power of Chriſt, he would have boaſted of his treaſon ; ſtrengthened his malice ; been foremoſt, with his own hands, in nailing Jeſus to the croſs ; been the loudeſt to mock and deride his dying agonies ; and then gone on to murder all the diſciples of Chriſt : And where would he have made a ſtand ? Surely not until he had hanged himſelf, which he would have done at laſt. The ſame may be ſaid of the moſt horrid monſters of wickedneſs that ever have been in the world ; *Herod*, *Nero*, *Alexander*, *Richard* IIId. of Britain, *Beadle*, *Benedict Arnold*, &c. Not one of theſe, or any other on earth, were ever, in any meaſure, ſo horribly wicked as they would have been, had all reſtraints been taken off. And all the reſtraints that ever were kept upon the wicked, are by the grace and power of the Mediator, and the purchaſe of his blood. The mercy, power, pity, and grace of the Redeemer is great and wonderful, even

where ſouls are not renewed. "The Lord is good unto all; and his tender mercies are over all his works."

I READILY grant there is a difference *in kind*, a *ſpecific difference* between common, and ſaving grace; or that grace which the renewed have, and that which is common to men. But in theſe particulars they do indeed agree; both are free: Both are good, and valuable in their nature: Both from God only through Chriſt: Both wholly unmerited by ſinners: Both beſtowed on ſinners who have equal dependence on God: Both are the fruit of the Mediator's undertaking for a guilty world, beſtowed in God's own time and manner. So that the great excellency of one above the other, does not, in the leaſt, militate againſt the preſent argument, to prove a real connection of the Meſſiah in a fœderal way with all mankind; but does fully confirm this doctrine, even as fully as if there was no ſpecific difference between them.

THERE are innumerable good things of a nature ſpecifically different, that are equally the gift and grace of the Mediator, as wiſdom and wealth; health and a good name; all the five ſenſes: All theſe are good, and all alike from the Son of God, as Creator and Governor of the world. Man could have enjoyed no good at all, had not a Mediator interpoſed; but the curſe, in its moſt literal, plaineſt meaning, would have been executed. God was able to make Adam and Eve underſtand what he ſaid to

them. They knew what was meant by the word *day*; and God was able to make them underſtand what was meant by the word *die*, or *death*. Otherwiſe he did, in effect, ſay nothing to them. If he did not make them underſtand him, there was no threatening at all, *as to them*, in what he ſaid. They knew the day meant twenty-four hours, or a diurnal, apparent revolution of the ſun. God made them to underſtand, that to *die*, ſignified, with reſpect to the body, a total ceſſation of all vital functions, all ſenſibility; and, with reſpect to the ſoul, the total loſs of his moral image, and his favor forever more, with the miſeries connected therewith, and the eternal pains due to the tranſgreſſion of his holy and good law.

When they had ſinned, they really expected that, within that very day, as now deſcribed, their bodies would ſo die; and that, as they found their ſouls deprived of the moral image of God, they would forever remain ſo, with all the anguiſh and ſorrow, pain and diſtreſs, contained in the malediction, to all eternity; even a duration abſolutely interminable. This appeared in their fearful conduct, when "they heard the voice of the Lord God, walking in the garden in the cool of the day," i. e. in the latter part of that very day on which they rebelled.

No doubt, they thought he was come to execute the ſentence upon them, juſt as he had ſpoken, and as they plainly underſtood. And they knew that this was juſt and righteous. But, to their great and joyful ſurprize,

they found it quite otherwiſe. A dark intimation was given them, in an indirect manner, of the ground God proceeded upon, to avoid the violation of his honor and truth, viz. a ſubſtitute, a vicar, an atonement, one in their place and ſtead, the ſeed of the woman. The Mediator began to officiate that moment for all the human kind. They were all preſent, all in the firſt pair. And he has conſtantly officiated for all the human kind ever ſince, and will until the curſe is wholly wiped away. Sin reigned unto death, even then immediately upon the fall; and grace began its operation on the ſame day, and ſhall reign with an overcoming, prevailing triumph, to the end of the world, and to all eternity. "That as ſin hath reigned unto death, even ſo might grace reign through righteouſneſs, unto eternal life, by Jeſus Chriſt our Lord." Rom. v. 21.

At what time our firſt parents were renewed, is immaterial to the preſent argument; but it is certain the Meſſiah on that very day, operated, in a bleſſed and merciful degree. He ſpared their lives. They did not die an immediate and remedileſs death, as they deſerved, and expected from God's own mouth. On that day, they were graciouſly pointed to an atonement. The great high Prieſt exhibited an oblation before their eyes; the import of which was, that one of their ſeed ſhould be divinely qualified for a full atonement, and his death ſhould ſtand for theirs. Then he took the ſkins of thoſe beaſts which were ſlain, and clothed

them. Which denoted that they were accepted, not in their own fig leaves, a garment of their own preparing, their own vile character; but in the character of the future Meſſiah, the cloathing or garments of his all perfect righteouſneſs. Much grace and mercy was granted them on that very day; and more added, as a gracious Sovereign ſaw proper. So it is with all their poor, loſt children. They have always much mercy and grace from Chriſt; and he goes on to the conſummation of it as a gracious *Sovereign*.

All this is only in a goſpel way; and ſo "the goſpel was preached to every creature under heaven," even from the fall of man. i. e. Goſpel grace was always manifeſted, or held forth, to all human creatures, in ſome degree or other. And where Chriſt begins a good work, as Mediator, he will perfect it, in his own way and time. It will iſſue in perfection at the great day. "Being confident of this very thing, that he which hath begun a good work in you, will perform it until the day of Jeſus Chriſt." Phil. i. 6.

It is moreover evidential that this is the doctrine of grace and ſalvation; becauſe this, and this only, excludes all boaſting. *Good diſtinctions* are the *only* things that men boaſt of, or at leaſt, what they value as good. If they come in a way of mere grace, without any hand of theirs in them, they always feel more pride in them, than if they came by their own good efforts. How proud are mankind of exquiſite beauty; noble birth;

a grand eſtate deſcended down from an ancient and dignified family? Every body knows that good things of this nature are all of mere favor or grace, pure gifts of God, in the way of nature and providence.

Say of a man, that he is deſcended of the moſt honorable family in the nation; that he has naturally the greateſt powers of mind of any man in it; that he carries the greateſt majeſty, dignity and beauty in his countenance, and in all his geſtures, together with the moſt unaffected, winning behavior; that in vigor and activity, he exceeds all: Add that he was made ſo, he was born with all this greatneſs and excellence in his very nature; and is indeed the completeſt work of God to be found within a thouſand miles. You can ſay nothing that will take hold of the human heart, to make a man feel prouder; though you have not ſaid one word, but what is an expreſſion of free, ſovereign grace, as the man himſelf will acknowledge. Indeed, he is much the prouder, on this very conſideration, that ſo great a Being as God himſelf, has taken ſuch peculiar notice of him, and ſingled him out as a ſpecial favorite.

Let another man hear it ſaid of him, that he was in every view mean and contemptible by nature; deſpicable in ſoul and body throughout; of a ſcandalous family from generation to generation; but he has taken ſo much pains to become ſomething, that he is really now, a man that ought to be reſpected, indeed a very worthy man. He

will hardly thank you for the compliment; though you attribute the whole of his virtue and worth to himself.

VERY great distinction from others, in honor and happiness, is what men most pride themselves in; and if this be owing to the peculiar notice of some great personage, it really adds to their gratification. Men are naturally proud of being peculiar favorites of the great. Mr. POPE, the celebrated poet, was a man more free from vanity, than most men; but he betrayed much on an occasion, and at a time when it was least to be expected. In writing his last will, when his thoughts were full of approaching death and another world, his pride is apparently moved by a matter of free, sovereign grace, a peculiar mark of distinction from a king. In the bequest of a valuable ring, which might have been quite as well described without telling how he came by it, he says, "*the ring which the king of Sardinia gave me.*" All the poets used to speak in like manner, and they expressed human nature. If they had received only a pipe, or any other small matter of a renowned poet, or any man of great note, as a free gift; they would be sure to take notice of the manner in which it came to them, valuing themselves on the mere gracious distinction of a renowned man. Such is human nature.

TELL a man that he is bad, how ready is he to keep himself in countenance, by enu-

merating many that do as he does! If he thought himſelf diſtinguiſhed from moſt others in wickedneſs, he would be far more aſhamed. Whether it reſpects pride or ſhame, *peculiar diſtinction* is the grand thing; and if that diſtinction come in a ſovereign way, from a great perſonage, it is not the leſs, but the more flattering. To be mean, deſpicable, and contemptible by birth and nature, or to be eſteemed ſo, mortifies human pride, more than to be ſo in any other way. Hence men are more mortified to be called fools, than knaves or cunning rogues. It is indeed, diſtinction from others in a way of excellence, real or ſuppoſed, that is in every caſe, a ſtrong temptation to pride, in whatever way that diſtinction is made.

The reader may then ſay, that there will be this temptation to pride among the ſaints in heaven, to all eternity: For there will be in heaven, great and everlaſting diſtinctions of free grace. But this objection will vaniſh in a moment, when you conſider that all fuel for pride to kindle, will be forever taken away in that world; as no corruption at all will be admitted there; no moral capacity of pride.

You will then ſay, that from this view of things, eminent advances in grace and favor in this life are ſtrong incentives of pride, in the moſt exalted ſaints on earth. They are ſo. They always were, and always will be, ſo long as any moral depravity remains, or any principle of pride in their hearts. Paul found it ſo when God, of his free grace, ſet

him at a great diſtance from others, by ſpecial diſcoveries and divine raptures. 2 Cor. xii. Saints in heaven, will find the ſame thing operating in a way of the deepeſt humility, which now takes hold of their corrupt part, as an incentive to pride and ſelf exaltation. On earth, ſpiritual pride hath always been a very dangerous and troubleſome enemy to the comfort of eminent ſaints, indeed to all good people.

If you enquire, how did holy angels find pride originating or moving in them? I anſwer; this is a queſtion that never was ſolved, nor ever can be, *by man*. It is a fact; but wholly incomprehenſible by us, as innumerable other facts are. This, however, may be ſaid, ſaints in heaven are ſecured by Chriſt; the fallen angels were not.

In a word, the moſt exalted ſaints in heaven, will be as much before others in humility, as in any other part of their holy attainments; and will bow as much lower before the throne of God, as they are exalted higher. Thus I am advocating the only rational, goſpel doctrine, that will exclude all boaſting. In heaven, it will be confirmed, when they will view the matter of their juſtification, the righteouſneſs of Chriſt, "to all and upon all, without any difference."

This goſpel doctrine tends greatly to the promotion of practical holineſs and virtue.

The bands of love and gratitude ever were, and ever will be, the proper bands of a man. Fear and terror, never yet had any

direct tendency to holineſs and a good life. I mean common, legal fear. For it always carries in it, not only terror, but even odium of its object. It never attracts the ſoul to the object of terror, but quite the reverſe. Love, or a ſenſe of goodneſs, amiableneſs, kindneſs, or benevolence, always attracts and aſſimilates the ſoul to its object. As God hath conſtituted immortal ſouls and their objects, it cannot be otherwiſe. This is not only the clear doctrine of reaſon and ſcripture; but alſo the doctrine of all called orthodox, ſince the days of the apoſtles; remarkably ſo, ſince the reformation from popery.

It is true, papiſts and arminians have often told us that the doctrine tends to licentiouſneſs; and that, if they believed the infinite ſtedfaſt, immutable love of God, and faithfulneſs of Chriſt, as we do, in reſpect to our ſalvation, the certain perſeverence of believers and the like, they would indulge themſelves in all manner of ſinful luſts and pleaſures. While their hearts are unrenewed, and while they believe not this glorious doctrine, they may think as they ſay. But did they believe, and feel the power of it, they would know better, as calviniſts have always told them. They would find the cords of ſuch love very different bands from what they imagine, while in ignorance of God and the power of his love.

What great things has ſlaviſh fear or terror ever done to make men holy? It will keep them from many open and daring

crimes, in the ſight of man, it is true: But at the ſame time they will be juſt as guilty in the ſight of God, as if they had no ſuch fear. In their very ſouls, they will wiſh and long to commit them, as much as ever. In this wiſh, and longing deſire of the ſoul, lies all the ſin, in the ſight of God.

PRINCIPLES of fear are managed to good advantage, by the laws and government of men. And without taking this great and good advantage of a principle of ſlaviſh, unſanctified fear, in man, we could not live in human ſociety. But the vile, hardened wretch, who is reſtrained in his overt actions, only by fear of the whip and the gallows, is as greatly guilty in the ſight of God, as if theſe fearful reſtraints had never been upon him. The civil magiſtrate has much to do with this principle of fear in man. All human laws make great uſe of it; and this is wiſe, and good for the end propoſed. But alas! how little doth this avail as to things inviſible and eternal? How little with the habituated drunkard? How little with the inveterate thief and robber? Take away the fear of viſible, temporal puniſhment, and does it at all appear that the terrors of eternal damnation have any influence on their conduct? Although they profeſs to believe the doctrine, and allude to it in almoſt all their converſation, their mouths being perpetually full of hell and damnation. Verily it is a ſenſe of the goodneſs of God that leadeth to repentance, a true ſenſe of God, *as love*, that meliorates the heart, with a di-

vine power on the life and conduct. "If ye love me keep my commandments." "Walk in love." "The love of Chriſt conſtraineth us."

I NEVER yet heard any man pray or preach to any congregation, without building on principles, which, by juſt, inevitable conſequence, would infer the ſure ſalvation of all the human kind, *at laſt*.

WE all agree in theſe particulars. We pray for the ſalvation of all. We, in the name of Chriſt, offer ſalvation to all on the purchaſe of his blood. In the name of Chriſt, we command all to believe. We tell all men that they have a good warrant to believe: That a ſufficient foundation is laid for them all to believe; and that if they do believe they ſhall certainly be ſaved; and that not at all on the merit of their faith, but the merit of Chriſt: That their repentance and faith and whatever good may be in them, does not in the leaſt alter the foundation, or object of their faith. We tell them that it is the greateſt ſin *not to believe*; that it maketh God a liar, as far as they are able. In the name of Chriſt, we promiſe them full pardon and life eternal, when they repent, and believe, and obey the goſpel; and this, not in the leaſt, *for* their repentance, faith, and obedience. What then, do we make of all theſe graces *in man*, but only means leading to the enjoyment of an end, not dependent on *theſe means*, but *they* dependent on *that*: Not an end which

theſe means do eſtabliſh; but eſtabliſhed beforehand, as an immutable foundation, on which alone is built the propriety, uſe and neceſſity of *all theſe means*?

I HAVE often heard much inconſiſtency, and contradiction in the prayers and preaching of good men; but never heard one performing theſe duties, who did not adopt many ſentiments, which, by juſt conſequence, would infer the ſalvation of all mankind, made previouſly ſure in the purpoſe of God, and the foundation he hath laid in Zion. This is conſiſtent. Otherwiſe, the ſalvation of man is dependent on *himſelf*, if any thing can be *on a creature*. He depends on his qualifications and exerciſes of mind, as the foundation of all his hope. What God hath done is juſt nothing, or worſe than nothing to him, without theſe diſtinctions *in himſelf*, or before he hath them. All God hath done gives him no ſecurity. As if one ſhould ſay, that the will and teſtament of his father was not his ſecurity for the legacy; but his opening and reading of the will, after his father's death, was the only thing that ſecured him. Would you not tell ſuch an one that he did not ſpeak with propriety; that his whole ſecurity was in the will and teſtament of his father; and that his opening and reading it only gave him knowledge of it and comfort in it.

WE uſually pray to God, juſt as Paul directed, and on the ſame ground which he has eſtabliſhed. We pray for the ſalvation

of all men. This we ought not to do without a foundation in the word of God. If God has decided the point in his word, that many ſhall be damned eternally, in their own perſons, we have no warrant to pray as we do. But the apoſtle bids us pray for the ſalvation of all men, even ſuch wicked kings and magiſtrates as Nero, and the bloody, perſecuting magiſtrates in thoſe days, for all the cruel perſecutors of the church, and for every body elſe, without a ſingle exception; and then gives this as our warrant, "God will have all men to be ſaved and to come unto the knowledge of the truth." He alſo enjoins it upon us to give thanks for all men, on the ſame ground; becauſe "Chriſt gave himſelf a ranſom for all." At the ſame time, he plainly intimates, that the time was not then come to pour in all the light that God had deſigned in after ages; that a progreſſion of light would continue as it had begun, and proceeded thus far; and that the glorious doctrine would be more fully manifeſt in due time. Read 1. Tim. ii. 1,—6.

THE moſt literal tranſlation that can poſſibly be given of thoſe words which I have more than once alluded to, is this; *a teſtimony for times proper.** In the Engliſh bible it ſtands, "*to be teſtified in due time.*" However, it is ſcarce worth while, in any place, to correct our laſt Engliſh tranſlation of the bible: For every man that is well ſkilled in

* τὸ μαρτύριον καιροῖς ἰδίοις.

the original languages, who is alſo a man of candor, will bear me witneſs, that there is ſcarcely a ſingle ſentence in the tranſlation, but what will bear, without marring the true ſenſe any wiſe eſſentially.

If it is certain, that the word of God, his juſtice and his glory, do aſcertain the eternal, *perſonal* damnation of many; we ought to pray for that awful event, as explicitly as for any thing elſe. "*Thy will be done,*" ought to run through all our prayers. But how would it ſtrike the minds of any congregation in the world, to hear him that leads in prayer, crying mightily to God, that many, or moſt of his fellow men, might be the miſerable victims of his eternal vengeance *perſonally*, in hell to all eternity. Many men diſcern premiſes well, but do not ſee the juſt conſequence. We have always ſeen it a clear goſpel duty, founded on goſpel warrant, to pray for the ſalvation of all men, and give thanks for all men, on the foundation laid in Chriſt. If a great many have not diſcerned the conſequence of ſuch premiſes, it is no more than what happens in many other caſes every day.

I am far enough from being an enthuſiaſt, and believe I was never thought ſo by any perſon, but rather the reverſe: However, I think it is good and ſound reaſoning, to argue from our own experience, and from what other honeſt people affirm to us from their experience. Having had the ſpecial

care of souls, many years, and been happy in my charge, I have often conversed with persons under special awakenings, and great concern about their souls. I have always kept up the holy law in their view, with all its infinite purity and strictness, and tremendous terrors to the enemies of God; have always told the distressed that they could *in no wise* help themselves, or make any distinction in themselves; charged them to make no dependence on their prayers, tears, reformations, or any thing they feel within themselves, but on the sovereign grace of God, through the atonement of his Son, totally exclusive of every thing else in the universe; always pointing them to Christ as the end of the law, in the stead of sinners.

I HAVE found numbers that have been by the Spirit of God, brought to this sense of the way of salvation, and have rested in it as a safe way. They have found it attended with evangelical repentance and great comfort. And hence have invited the vilest of sinners to come to Christ, and trust in him, without one moment's delay; telling them there was enough in Christ for their salvation, *vile as they now are*; that the atonement was sufficient to recommend them to God *in their very worst condition of soul and life*; and that they never could obtain any qualification, within or without, that would move the heart of God towards them; but that all things on God's part, are ready.

THEY have told me, that they never found themselves so unqualified, as when their

relief and comfort broke in upon them in a way of *mere faith*; and that they looked far from themſelves, even as far as *Mount Calvary*, for all their hope; and that they ſaw all God had done to relieve their diſtreſſed ſouls, was done, ſure and certain, long before they were born. And that they could make no foundation of hope in all that God had wrought on their ſouls, but praiſe his glorious name that he has been pleaſed, in mere, ſovereign mercy, to work thus effectually on them, only in order to lead them to the ſenſe and comfort of what was immutable truth before, viz. The all-ſufficiency of Chriſt for the chief of ſinners. Theſe perſons have generally brought forth fruits meet for repentance, and walked as real chriſtians.

THE obſervation of my fathers and brethren in the goſpel miniſtry, as many of them have told me, is the very ſame in their concerns with ſouls, with what I have now mentioned. They have alſo told me, it is their true experience with reſpect to their own ſouls, and all their comfort; and I am certain it is mine. It is well known that all pious proteſtant miniſters have taken this very method in guiding ſouls to Chriſt. And all the ſucceſs they have found, has been by thus cutting off ſinners every way, as much as poſſible, from every dependence, but on Chriſt alone. God has granted his peculiar bleſſing on this doctrine, and this way of guiding poor, miſerable ſinners to a Savior. No miniſter of the goſpel in this

land was ever more bleſſed of God in his labors, perhaps, than the renowned biſhop *Stoddard,* of Northampton. Every one that is acquainted with his character and writings muſt be ſenſible that this was his method.

MANY, no doubt, were brought to know Chriſt, in that remarkable period, in the year 1740, and a few ſucceeding years, notwithſtanding the great frailty and diſtraction of human nature appeared much in thoſe days. All, ſo far as I can learn, who became true followers of Chriſt, in thoſe times, built firmly on this very doctrine; that Chriſt alone is the compleat Savior of the chief of ſinners, excluſive of every diſtinction in themſelves, previouſly moving the heart of God towards them, or, in any wiſe, fitting them for mercy; that all that maketh them to differ from the moſt abandoned of the human race, flows wholly from a previous ſource, alike open to all, and built on a foundation as independent of man, as God was in creating him at firſt. It is well known that the moſt ſucceſsful preachers in thoſe days, dwelt mainly on theſe very doctrines.

THIS doctrine of ſaving, UNIVERSAL grace, *is perfectly conſiſtent with the moſt plain and poſitive declarations of the word of God, that the pains of hell ſhall be endleſs; and that the wicked ſhall go away into everlaſting puniſhment, in all the boundleſs extent of theſe words, and many others that convey the ſame idea of the*

endleſs puniſhment of ſinners, and that in the plaineſt poſſible manner of expreſſion.

In their *Surety*, *Vicar*, or *Subſtitute*, i. e. in Chriſt, "*the head of every man*," they go away into *everlaſting puniſhment*, in a true goſpel ſenſe. In him they ſuffer infinite puniſhment, i. e. he ſuffers for them, in their room and ſtead. But how ſo? The divine nature never ſuffered, and the human nature was not infinite, nor capable of infinite ſufferings; yet by union in perſon with infinite Deity, the goſpel, the divine conſtitution does account the atonement infinite. The obeying, and the ſuffering human nature was as much united to all the attributes of Deity, as to any one of them; to Deity in all his infinite perfections; to the eternity of Deity as much as to his omniſcience, almightineſs, or any other attribute. And the ſufferings of Chriſt are eternal ſufferings, juſt in the ſame way of reaſoning that they are infinite. The ſame ineffable, hypoſtatic union of human and divine natures, which connects infinity with manhood in one perſon, does equally unite eternity with the ſame. There is the ſame goſpel propriety in calling them eternal ſufferings, as infinite ſufferings. It is only by perſonal union with Deity, that either term will bear.

The apoſtle gives us this idea, as plainly as any other, to lead us to eſtimate the atonement complete for the ſins of the world, and in the goſpel account, an eternal puniſhment. He conſiders the gift of ſalvation by Chriſt, under the idea of a will or teſta-

ment, that makes the legacy ſure; as ſure before the legatee knows any thing about it, or has any comfort in it, as afterwards. And, as in all his writings, he exhibits the atonement complete in every other view, ſo he does in the eternity of it, in the divine account; that none may imagine himſelf to be expoſed to perſonal puniſhment in hell to all eternity, for want of an eternal atonement, any more than for want of an infinite one. He tells us that a ſenſe of this, will free the conſcience from every bond that might hold the poor ſinner under obligation to ſuffer; and will alſo become a ſpring of holy gratitude and living ſacrifice to God. "How much more ſhall the blood of Chriſt, who, *through the eternal Spirit*, offered himſelf without ſpot to God, purge your conſcience from dead works to ſerve the living God?" Heb. ix. No perſon of judgment will ſay that the phraſe, *through the eternal Spirit*, here ſignifies, that the eternal Spirit of God ſupported Chriſt in his ſufferings: For he was then wholly forſaken in this ſenſe, and left, in his expiring moments, without any ſupport at all, as much as ever a victim was, when bound and bleeding on the altar. It was then he cried out, "My God, my God, why haſt thou forſaken me!"

We cannot make the atonement ſufficient for our redemption in any ſenſe; unleſs we conſider the human nature infinitely dignified, by perſonal union with Deity, with every attribute of Deity, one as much as another. On this very ground it is, that

the merit of the atonement took place, and was efficacious long before Chriſt came in the fleſh. Yea, from eternity, it was efficacious, on our behalf, in the mind and decree of God. And it was, from eternity, regarded in the gracious purpoſe of the Moſt High; as he always determined to ſave ſinners in this way and no other. "Then was I by him, as one brought up with him; and I was daily his delight, rejoicing always before him; rejoicing in the habitable parts of the earth, and my delights were with the ſons of men." Prov. viii.

THE atonement of the Lamb of God, which taketh away the ſin of the world, was preſent in God's view from all eternity; and will be ſo to all eternity, as much as when he was actually bleeding on the croſs, in all his amazing agonies. Thus he is "the Lamb ſlain from the foundation of the world." Or, if you put the adjective before the ſubſtantive, as a late writer does, and as it ſtands in the original, the idea is the ſame; "the ſlain Lamb from the foundation of the world."

THUS, at the great and ſolemn day, characters ſhall be ſeparated one from another, as a ſhepherd divideth the ſheep from the goats. God will ſhew infinite approbation to the *character* of his own Son, the Son of man, as fœderal head in union with his redeemed creatures, placing *it* at his right hand; a phraſe denoting approbation and honor. And he will manifeſt infinite wrath, indignation and vengeance againſt the real

character of man, placing it at his left hand; which denotes the utmoſt deteſtation and abhorrence. The place of his Son will, on that day, be at his right hand, as it always was, and always will be, and "where I am," ſays Jeſus, "there ſhall my ſervants be." The character of ſinners, the real character of all men ſince the fall, was always at God's left hand, and always will be. God never abhorred man as his creature, never hated, and never will hate any thing in man, but his bad character. In Chriſt, he has no bad character, but one infinitely good. And God will bid all that ſuſtain it, welcome to all the joys and glories of heaven; even all whoſe ſins the Lamb of God came to take away.

When the great Judge ſhall give final ſentence, and thus diſplay his wondrous love to his elect head, and his elect body of human nature; alſo his tremendous abhorrence of the character of ſinners, it will make all human nature tremble. But they will *rejoice* with trembling. Their amazing ſenſe of the holy indignation of God againſt ſin, will not allay their holy joy, which will be in God alone, on that day, and to all eternity. They will ſee their perſonal deſerts in the *eternal ſufferings* of their Head: For in goſpel account they are ſo; though in time endured once for all on the croſs. They will, I ſay, then, and forever-more, ſee their damnable character and deſerts in themſelves; and will go away into everlaſting puniſhment, in this ſenſe. This is the

true, and only ſenſe of the goſpel conſtitution; which is well called a wonderful myſtery, claiming the admiration and aſtoniſhment of angels and ſaints, now and forever.

To behold the redeemed ſurrounded with the moſt formidable diſplays of the wrath of God forever, againſt their real perſonal character *while in this world*, and with his awful indignation forever, as a burning flame, againſt all ungodlineſs and unrighteouſneſs of men; and to behold the very perſons to whom this real character did perſonally pertain, made perfectly innocent in a ſubſtituted character, their robes all waſhed and made white in the blood of the Lamb, with clean hands and a pure heart, dwelling in this devouring fire, and inhabiting theſe everlaſting burnings, in diſplays of righteous and holy Deity; and yet perfectly bleſſed, and even the more bleſſed, for this their ſituation; in the midſt of all theſe awful diſplays, dwelling on high, and having their place of defence the munition of rocks, bread given them and their waters ſure: This is indeed a wonder of love worthy of the wiſdom of God only wiſe. Iſa. xxxiii.

All this glory and terror of divine holineſs and juſtice, we ſee, and forever ſhall ſee, in the ſufferings of the Son of God for ſinners. And there is no more need of the eternal *perſonal* damnation of any of the human race further to diſplay and illuſtrate the glory of God's juſtice, and his infinite holy anger againſt ſin; than there is

need of the dim light of a candle, to help us to behold the beautiful face of the earth in the vernal ſeaſon, when the ſun ſhines in the meridian, with all his glorious ſplendor and in his full ſtrength. Even to ſuppoſe otherwiſe, is in full oppoſition to the ſole glory of God and Chriſt in the atonement. The goſpel is, with great propriety, called a "miniſtration of righteouſneſs." i. e. righteouſneſs diſplayed, imparted, and applied, even as the miniſtration of healing medicines, imparted and applied for the recovery of the ſick.

It is, moreover, evidential of the truth of this doctrine of free ſovereign grace, as now illuſtrated, that *there is no poſſible danger in believing, and living according to the genuine dictates of it.*

It will certainly have the ſame influence on the heart and life, which the common proteſtant doctrine of grace always had; but only much more powerful in its bleſſed operations and effects. It is the ſelf ſame doctrine, in all points but this: It extends the ſame eternal good will of God to all poor ſinners of mankind; which we have been taught, by puritan divines, is confined only to a part; and it may be to a very ſmall part indeed, agreeably to the more natural aſpect of their doctrine. It differs no more from the doctrine of *Calvin*, *Owen*, and *Edwards*, and the great body of proteſtants, than a circle as large as the periphery of the earth, differs from a circle of the diam-

eter of one cubit. Both have all the ſame properties, and every demonſtration may be built on the one, that may on the other; but only one is much larger than the other.

In this caſe, we hold the great diſtinguiſhing doctrines of divine revelation exactly as they have always been taught, by thoſe called orthodox. Particularly; the firſt Adam a federal, as well as natural head, for all human nature: Our fall, guilt and miſery in and by him: The kind decrees, and immutable purpoſes of the Moſt High to ſave ſinners: The covenant of redemption with the ſecond federal head, even Chriſt, the ſecond man, the Lord from heaven: The all ſufficiency of his atonement, and his obedience unto death, in the room and ſtead of ſinners: The neceſſity of regeneration by the almighty power, and free grace of God: The neceſſity of repentance, faith, and ſanctification, a holy mind, perſeverance to the end, all through Chriſt, and by the power of his ſpirit and grace. Yet, we think the doctrines of divine love, redeeming love and grace, include a greater number of poor, wretched ſinners, all alike unworthy of mercy; than good people have, in time paſt imagined. This is the only point of difference.

I believe, God will have all men to be ſaved: That the Lamb of God hath taken away the ſin of the world: Died for the ſins of the whole world: That as ſin hath reigned unto death, much more ſhall grace reign through righteouſneſs to eternal life, by Je-

ſus Chriſt our Lord. I believe all this, in the common, plain, natural ſenſe of language; and ſo I do a thouſand other plain aſſertions in the bible as full and direct to the ſame purpoſe as theſe are. Yet, I have every motive, even with additional force, to ſeek the kingdom of God and his righteouſneſs; to preſs into the kingdom of God; to make my calling and election ſure; that ever was yet urged from the word of God: And ſo has every man in the world.

We inſiſt on the ſame qualifications and *in the ſame way*; as do they who are called orthodox. We know that while we believe not with an holy heart, we ſhall be damned. We know that except we are born again, we cannot ſee the kingdom of God, are condemned already; and that the wrath of God abideth on us, unleſs we are united to Chriſt by regeneration and ſaving faith; and that except we repent we ſhall all aſſuredly periſh. We inſiſt on every medium, every qualification for heaven that ever was inſiſted on, by any pure goſpel preacher. We have every motive to avoid all the ways of wickedneſs, and uſe all the means of grace and ſalvation that ever the renowned *Calvin* had. He believed that all the elect ſhould infallibly be ſaved, and no more; ſo do I. He believed, God hath fixed and eſtabliſhed the certain number, from all eternity, as immutably as his own being; ſo do I. And let men cavil as much as they pleaſe; there is but juſt one way to get rid of this doctrine; and that is to deny divine revelation, and the

neceſſary attributes of God. *Calvin* believed that Chriſt had undertaken to prepare all the elect for heaven, and would moſt certainly ſee the work done, in his own time and way; ſo do I. He inſiſted on the neceſſity of the means of grace and ſalvation, and great propriety of them, and adduced the word of God, and all the reaſon and nature of things, to demonſtrate that as a truth; which he did beyond all rational contradiction; ſo do I. His idea of heaven and hell was the ſelf ſame as mine, as to the nature of the happineſs and miſery of each. I mention Mr. *Calvin*; becauſe his name and character are much known. I might unite with him, the great body of chriſtian teachers ſince his day.

Now where is the difference between us, in the doctrine I plead for? This, indeed gives a greater diſplay, a more aſtoniſhing manifeſtation of the goodneſs of the great Father of all, than we have before admitted. The eternal, rich, free, ſovereign love of the immenſe eternal ſource of love, breaks forth to our view, in more copious, and amazing floods. The triumph of grace is more glorious than heretofore, *in our ſenſe of it*; and gives our ſouls a moſt ſurprizing, adoring, rapturous ſhock, enough to make us break forth, "O the depth of the riches, both of the wiſdom and knowledge of God! how unſearchable are his determinations,* and his ways paſt finding out!" "For of him,

* κρίματα.

and through him, and to him are all things: to whom be glory forever. Amen."

EVERY judicious reader will see, that the use of means cannot alter the case as to the salvation of the elect, any more on the common doctrine of predestination, than on this I plead for; yet there is the greatest propriety in the use of appointed means. On both principles, the means and the end are inseparably connected, in the eternal gracious purpose of God.

UNTHINKING, unreasonable men have always been wont to tell those who were founded on the pure doctrines of free, sovereign grace, and who trusted all to God and nothing to themselves, and were thence led into pure and holy lives, lives of prayer, self denial, watchfulness, dying to the world, and all the vanities and carnal delights of it; that if they themselves had such a belief of God's character, decrees and dealings with men, they would plunge into all manner of sinful pleasures, and would gratify every lust, in the highest degree. However, they who have indeed received this grace of God, have constantly affirmed that the greater sense they had of the infinite, eternal, immutable love of God to them, the more they loved him and all his holy laws: And the greater assurance they had that Christ died for them, the more they hated and abhorred all their sinfulness of nature and life, which nailed so dear a Savior to the cross: The more they realized their absolute safety in God alone, and the certainty of their perse-

verance to the end, through the promises grace, and faithfulness of Christ, the more they felt their hearts weaned from the world: The more spiritual and heavenly was the frame and temper of their minds, as they saw more of the vanity of themselves and of all creatures, and that God was all in all.

The children of God have always spoken the truth in all this. And we can say the same, in answer to the same cavils of a blind world at enmity with God, and ignorant of his nature, which is love. Only we may add, that as we have more extensive views of the love of God, and the glorious harmony of all his attributes, in gathering together in one all things in Christ; so, we trust, it has a more powerful influence on our souls, of the same kind.

If we really mistake concerning the extent of the merits, and salvation of the Savior of all men; it is at the farthest remove from a mistake, that affects the essentials of religion. It is only a wrong conjecture as to the number whom Christ will save, in one and the same way. There always have been different opinions among good people in this article. Some have been far more charitable than others, on this subject.

Some, at this day, expect a millennium of three hundred and sixty five thousand years, i. e. a thousand prophetic years; in which long period almost all on earth shall be holy and happy. I was ever in this sentiment; and am full in it now. Yet many good peo-

ple, at the preſent day and for ages paſt, have ſaid that they could find nothing in the word of God, but that the day of judgment might be in their day; having no expectation at all of ſuch a latter-day glory. Now, there is an almoſt infinite difference between the belief of theſe two, as to the extent of ſalvation; yet both are in the ſame ſure way to heaven, and on the ſame eſſential foundation. There is a much greater difference between thoſe that have faith in a millennium, and thoſe who have not, as to the number that ſhall be ſaved; than there is between the advocates for the ſalvation of all men, and the former; at leaſt as to thoſe that have already lived on the earth.

Suppose you hear three pious chriſtians diſcourſing on the doctrines of grace, and the way of ſalvation; all in perfect agreement. At the cloſe of the converſation, each gives his opinion with regard to the number, to be ſaved. One ſays, the way appears to him ſo exceeding ſtrait, that he believes not more than one hundred thouſand of all the human race, will ever get to heaven. Another ſays, he believes there will be more than one hundred thouſand ſaved, but he is confident not a million. The third, having great faith in a millennium, and naturally ſomewhat unhappy in his talent at computation, is perſuaded that there will be more of the human race ſaved, than there are ſingle atoms of matter in this whole globe of earth. You would not imagine that either was in an error, in any

thing that concerned his own ſalvation. From a good acquaintance with human nature, you would only infer, that the firſt was naturally a man of a narrow ſoul and ſtingy temper of mind; that the ſecond was, in theſe reſpects, not ſo unhappy; and that the laſt was rather inattentive in his computations; but that they might be all in the ſame way to heaven. And, indeed, if a great ſenſe of the *free*, ſovereign grace of God, leads men into vice and immorality, *how comes it to paſs*, as always appears to be fact, *that they who have the higheſt ſenſe of this, have ever been men of the pureſt lives?*

If I underſtand the goſpel to be glad tidings of great joy, which ſhall be to all people, in the common natural ſenſe of language; and another underſtands the ſame words to mean glad tidings to a few people of all ſorts, and very ſad tidings to the bulk of mankind, as being a ſure occaſion of enhancing their eternal miſery in an awful degree: Yet, if I have goſpel qualifications to reliſh and enjoy heaven, I ſhall go there; and ſo will he in the ſame way. For we both agree in the neceſſity of the ſame work on our ſouls, without which there is no ſalvation for any. I inſiſt on theſe qualifications, as flowing from a previous all-ſufficient atonement made for all ſinners of the human race, and as neceſſary to give me ſenſe and enjoyment of the benefit of that atonement, to which Chriſt has given me a previous title. He inſiſts on theſe qualifi-

cations to make out his title for him, inſtead of taking it ſolely from Chriſt, and as ſealed in his blood alone. I believe that, while we were yet enemies, Chriſt died for the ungodly, and ſecured them for life eternal, as a Prieſt; and then goes on, as a Prophet and King, to enlighten and ſubdue them, and make them know the things freely given them of God. I put the atonement at the bottom, the death of Chriſt as the chief corner ſtone, and build all upon that. He ſuppoſes the ſacrifice of Chriſt not to be the foundation of all our hope; but when we have got good previous qualifications, then we may make great advantage of it, and bring it in ſomewhere in the building, though not at the bottom of all, Chriſt the *only foundation*. Both of us agree in this, that the greater ſenſe and experience of God's free grace we have, the more we ſhall love and ſerve God; and that the love of God, or God in his character, which is LOVE, is the only principle that conſtraineth us to love God, and live an holy life, or that the goodneſs of God leadeth to repentance.

THE general aſpect of the *limitarian principles*, is, that a very few, in compariſon with the whole of mankind, ſhall ever be ſaved; and, indeed, that but a very ſmall part, even of thoſe people that enjoy divine revelation, will eſcape eternal, perſonal damnation; and a far leſs number, in proportion, among all heathen nations. On this principle, the goſpel is by no means

glad tidings of great joy which ſhall be unto *all people*, in any common, natural ſenſe of language: But to people and nations, as ſuch, it is very *bad news*, *doleful tidings* to any nation or people, in a collective view, as they are plainly addreſſed in the text, to which I allude.

TAKE, for example, the inhabitants of the United States, as a people. More than nine tenths of them, the *limitarians* ſuppoſe, are, at the preſent day, going to eternal deſtruction; and that a very great majority of all that ever lived here, are now in the intolerable flames of an eternal hell, with torments aggravated more than ten thouſand-fold beyond what they would have been, had they never heard the goſpel. How then are the tidings glad tidings to the people, as ſuch? They are plainly declared as ſuch every where in the voice of the goſpel. Yet upon this plan, the people will be far more miſerable than if they had never heard the goſpel. Suppoſe one out of an hundred is ſaved, which is as many as the general aſpect of the *limitarian* doctrine will admit; or, if you pleaſe, ſuppoſe ten among a hundred, which is going quite beyond the charity of the doctrine: You muſt ſtill allow that all the reſt are ten thouſand times more miſerable, and will be ſo to all eternity, than if they had never heard the goſpel. So that the people, as ſuch, and as they are plainly addreſſed with good news, GLAD TIDINGS, will be found far more miſerable than if they had never heard theſe tidings. Thus

the gospel becomes glad tidings only to a very few individuals; but dreadful tidings to any people, or all people, as such.

A SOVEREIGN prince has a colony consisting of one million subjects. All much on a level, laboring under the toils and burdens which attend a people, that eat their bread in the sweat of their face, struggling hard for a comfortable provision for themselves and families. The common lot in this evil world. The king sends an herald to assemble them all together, and to address them in the following words:

"BEHOLD I bring you glad tidings of great joy, which shall be to all this people. For it is the immutable decree of your sovereign, that a few of you shall be delivered from all your toils and labors, and shall be exceedingly rich and happy all their days, abounding in every possible pleasure and delight. And that all the rest of you shall be inexpressibly more miserable and distressed all their days, than ever they have been. Their labors, toils and vexation shall be increased more than a thousand fold. Your sovereign will mark the happy few with a distinction, which his own hand and no other can set upon them; and the multitude, not so marked, shall forever find their woes amazingly augmented."

WOULD not the colony, the people, be filled with horror at the tidings, and think the news exceedingly sorrowful? Would it not be much happier for that colony, as a people, to live as they did before;

though many toils and troubles attended them?

Now, ſhould the herald proceed to name the happy few, perhaps one in a thouſand; and the multitude of their brethren ſhould ſee them rejoicing and triumphing in the ſovereign diſtinction, by the free grace of their prince; would they not ſay that this very joy and triumph was all founded in pride and ſelfiſhneſs, and a total want of benevolence to the community? And ſhould thoſe favorites cry out glad tidings! glad tidings! would not the wailing multitude anſwer, "*To you glad tidings they may be; but not to the people. The colony is ruined; the people are undone, undone forever!*" And if theſe *few favorites* of their ſovereign had that amiable ſpirit of benevolence, which adorns human nature, and is one of the glories of the goſpel, would they not rather chuſe to return to a level with their brethren, and partake with them in common, in all troubles and calamities as before, than to be thus ſingled out for dignity, glory, and pleaſure, when neceſſarily connected with ſuch augmented woe and miſery to the people?

THE caſe now ſtated, applies to the goſpel tidings, on the *limitarian* plan. A few, very few that hear them, are made happy. All the reſt are much more dreadfully miſerable on account of Chriſt and the goſpel. This is fixed by the immutable purpoſe of heaven, with all the means, and every ſtep leading to the conſummation of it.

I HOLD to the doctrine of predeſtination as fully as any man in the world ever did, and that in the ſupra-lapſarian ſenſe, which is the only conſiſtent ſenſe. The abſolute ſovereignty of JEHOVAH I maintain, in the higheſt poſſible conception of it. But, it will abundantly appear, in its proper place, that JEHOVAH is not a God whoſe attributes and ſovereign will can admit of ſuch a predeſtination as that; ſuch decrees as I have alluded to. God is love, infinite love, ſovereign love; and ſuch love admits of no ſuch *limitarian* decrees; and the word of God abhors them, as you ſhall ſee in the ſequel.

IT is an evidence of the true goſpel, that there is no contradiction in it. Every ſentiment in it, is in full concord with the whole.

A SERMON is not made up of contradictory parts, if it be wholly a goſpel ſermon. Now, the doctrine I plead for, is the only plan that ever was exhibited, as conſiſtent with itſelf. The arminian ſcheme is full of inconſiſtencies. See what the late preſident *Edwards* has made of it; and he has demonſtration on his ſide. Many other great men have oppoſed it with the ſame force. The calviniſtic ſcheme, in the *limitarian* ſenſe, is every whit as *full of contradiction* and abſurdity; as hath often been objected, with arguments that admit of no confutation. The ſame may be ſaid of all the reſt that ever have been advanced in the world, except this alone. But this has not the

ſhadow of inconſiſtency with itſelf. If it be a mere hypotheſis, it is a ſelf-conſiſtent one.

On this plan, you may hold up to view the true nature and character of God: That of man in innocency: That of man fallen: The firſt and ſecond covenant: Give Jehovah his proper place, and man his place: Speak of a work of God on the ſouls of ſinners, as neceſſary to their ſalvation: Shew them that without this work they are damned, condemned already, and the wrath of God abideth on them: Tell them what Chriſt hath engaged, what he hath done and ſuffered, and for what end; and what he will certainly do: Command all ſinners to believe it, on pain of abiding damnation: Tell them the warrant and ground of their faith: That they are not commanded to create truth, or in the leaſt alter it, by all the changes and exerciſes of their own minds; but that eternal, immutable truth is ready to their hands, and, by mere faith, they muſt take hold of it and be ſaved: That this is the way, in Chriſt, ſure as Godhead can make it: That Chriſt is the way, the truth, and the life, &c. &c.

As this doctrine relates to practice, you may urge every moral duty, with infinite force, from motives truly evangelical; holding up the pains of ſin, and the beauties and rewards of holineſs, all in moſt glorious harmony.

The doctrine we have generally heard from our beſt preachers, ſince the reformation, hath been of this tenor, viz. "God

" hath elected to eternal life a part of man-
" kind, and Chriſt made an atonement for
" that part only." And they have commonly conveyed the idea of a very ſmall part, in proportion to the whole. " Which part are
" elected to the end. and to all the neceſſary
" means and qualifications; which God will
" infallibly beſtow upon them in his own
" way and time. All the reſt of mankind
" ſhall as certainly periſh, and that juſtly,
" the fault being all their own. Now we
" invite, and command every one to believe
" in Chriſt to ſalvation, every one alike:
" For in him there is a fulneſs for all." A thouſand arguments have been advanced to prove there is no inconſiſtency, no kind of equivocation, or illuſion in this way of preaching; but that it is the pure ſimplicity of the goſpel: While it hath always been clear demonſtration, on the other hand, that there is great duplicity and illuſion in it. Yet this preaching is exactly right, in every point but this one; *the extent of predeſtination*. Only extend it to all the human kind. Only define the decree in the words of the apoſtle; " *God will have all men to be ſaved.*" " *As ſin hath reigned unto death. ſo ſhall grace reign through righteouſneſs, unto eternal life, by Jeſus Chriſt our Lord.*" Many other expreſs declarations of divine revelation, of the ſame import, are as ſimple and expreſs to the ſame purpoſe, as any language will admit. I ſay, thus explain the decrees of God; and all their preaching would be as free from inconſiſtency as any mathematical demonſtration.

ONLY begin thus, in the plain, ſimple ſenſe of the words; "*Chriſt came that all men through him might be ſaved.*" Tell people that this is the eternal fixed predeſtination of the Moſt High; and that all means and qualifications are connected with it, in the ſame decree, and made as ſure as the end, to take place in his own way and time; yet ſo as to have the free will and actions of his elect, concerned in them, as moral agents and cauſes by counſel; which is the only poſſible way of connecting the intermediate ſteps with the end. Tell your audience ſo, I ſay, and then in all the reſt, you may preach law and goſpel juſt as *Calvin* or *Owen* did, or any other calviniſtic divine. Then you may indeed proclaim *Glad tidings of great joy to* ALL PEOPLE; and may urge every goſpel doctrine, duty and motive, juſt as we have been wont to hear, without the ſhadow of contradiction. Then you may call upon all poor, miſerable ſinners as Paul did. He told them all, that Chriſt had began his operation in their ſouls, as Mediator, and would perfect the whole work unto eternal life; dealing with moral agents *as ſuch*, in which the will and activity ſhould have their proper exerciſe. "Work out your own ſalvation with fear and trembling. For it is God who worketh in you, both to will and to do of his good pleaſure." On this plan the goſpel is plain and clear: And the uſual preaching of it, is conſiſtent with itſelf and with common ſenſe.

If any ſay here, that the uſe of means is of no conſideration, if the end is fixed and certain; they ſpeak in direct oppoſition to this idea of the decrees of God, and the whole ſcripture account of them, which ever unites the means and end, in one and the ſame decree; and againſt all the common ſenſe and common practice of mankind. Every one that owns the being of God, allows that he *certainly knew* every thing that ever did or ſhall take place; and that every future event ſhall certainly be juſt as God always knew it would be. But this never hinders their uſing means, in common life. Nothing can be more certain, than that which God always knew would be, is certain. Whatever diſtinction there is between the foreknowledge and decrees of God; every one ſees there can be none in the object, the infallible certainty of the event. Yet there is full room left for all moral agency to operate, with all the liberty that any creature can poſſibly be made capable of.

If any ſay, there can be no moral agency at all in creatures; this is a flat contradiction to all the common ſenſe and feeling of man. We all know our perfect freedom of will and action; not by any reaſoning or demonſtration: For it is too plain to admit of any. It is a prime, immediate perception of ſoul, which we always have, and conſtantly feel, and cannot poſſibly diveſt ourſelves of: Even as I feel heat or cold; or perceive that paper is white, and ink black; or that whatever is, *is*; or that a thing can-

not exist and exist at the same time. So that I have ever imagined that such a senseless cavil is worthy of no notice at all.

But to return. The gospel, on the ground I maintain, is all consistent with itself, with common sense and reason, and with universal experience, and with the best reasoning and practice of all mankind in every other matter. We always unite the proper means with the end, in all other cases; and there is no other way for moral agents to be treated, as such, and to act in proper character. Creatures are creatures, although God is God.

There is a sentiment, or impression, on the hearts of all men, concerning the dead, that universally favors the argument here advanced.

When the vilest sinner in the world is taken out of it, by the most sudden death, we dare not say, and it would wound our hearts to hear any one say, "*that person is certainly gone to an eternal hell, to suffer there in person forever.*" Who dare say of the most abandoned sailor, having his head taken off with a cannon ball, with an horrid oath in his mouth, "*I am certain that man shall burn forever in hell?*" Yet we might say so, with great confidence, on the principle I oppose. Had you, my reader, a son of this character, thus taken out of the world, would you be so deeply affected, in regard to his eternal doom, as if you certainly knew he was in hell? Or had you a son very dear to you,

even as Abſalom was to his father, and of a character to the laſt moment no better, taken out of the world by the hand of juſtice; would not the circumſtances of his death ſtrike your mind deeper, than any certain knowledge you have of his future ſtate? You may ſay the future ſtate of men is inviſible, and we have no buſineſs with it. Be it ſo. Yet, would it be in the power of any man to avoid the moſt dreadful anguiſh of ſoul, in ſuch a caſe, but from a *latent hope* in his heart, ariſing from the power and mercy of God? Would not any man in the world, feel more anguiſh of heart to ſee his ſon hanged as a criminal, than what he ever can feel with reſpect to his future ſtate, ſeparate from the circumſtances of his death? If we have no buſineſs with the inviſible world in ſuch a caſe, yet this does not alter the neceſſary and unavoidable feelings of human nature.

I AM perſuaded that any man, who has buried a dear child, in a caſe which is thought the moſt hopeleſs of all, will find, if he is critical to obſerve the feelings of his own heart, ſome *latent* aſſuaging of his grief, in thinking of the unſearchable riches of Chriſt, and the almighty power and infinite mercy of God. Have we not often obſerved much of this nature, in mourning for the dead, even in caſes that would admit of nothing but abſolute deſperation, on the *limitarian* plan? Deſpair, in this caſe, never takes place. There is ſomething in the ſoul of man that will not admit of it. What

but the hand of Deity has fixed in the hearts of all mankind this latent hope, in every death?

All the pungent pangs of David for the death of Abſalom, may be fully accounted for, on the principles of natural affection, without any conſideration of his future ſtate. Any tender parent would feel as he did, in the like caſe, without looking into futurity.

It is exceedingly ſtrange, on the *limitarian* plan, that the ſcriptures have never aſſerted that any particular perſon went to an eternal hell.

The ſtate of no one, perhaps, is more hopeleſs than that of Judas, who betrayed Chriſt the Savior of all men; yet not a word is ſaid of him but what may conſiſt with his ſalvation after death. He is called the ſon of perdition; and it is ſaid that he went to his own place. All this is but juſt what we may ſay of every ſinner, in kind, though of Judas in a very aggravated degree. Every man is a ſon of perdition until new born, damned until regenerated. Judas was a notable ſon of perdition, ſignally ſo, a moſt miſerable, loſt, condemned ſinner, until his death; in perdition until that moment, even until ſoul and body were ſeparated; until then a ſon of perdition in an extraordinary degree. Paul was ſo in a woful meaſure until he died, "*a wretched man*," with a "*body of death*." Every man is ſo, in a ſad degree, until the union of ſoul and body, which firſt contaminated the ſoul, is diſſol-

ved; ſome in a greater, and ſome in a leſs degree, according as the Head of every man, i. e. the Mediator, has been pleaſed to advance, or reſtrain his prophetic and kingly power and grace upon the ſoul.

JUDAS went to his own place, to a very horrible and ignominious death, in awful anguiſh and utter deſpair, in his own mind. His ſoul went, perhaps, to the loweſt ſeat provided for the elect human race, by him who died for the ſins of the whole world; to the loweſt place among all given to Chriſt. Judas being one given to Chriſt, as is expreſsly declared. Judas was loſt in an awful manner; he was loſt as an apoſtle of Chriſt; loſt as to all ſervice in this world; loſt with regard to all his comfort on earth; loſt as to any hope to ſupport his own ſoul here; loſt with reſpect to the proper ſeat of one of the twelve apoſtles in the world to come, and with reſpect to that dignified lot, in this world, which Matthias took in his place. He was, in fine, ſo loſt, ſuch a ſon of perdition, and in ſuch wiſe went to his own place, as fully to ſupport and juſtify the moſt plain and natural import of all the awful things ſaid in the word of God concerning him; without any conſideration of poſitive miſery, after death. The ſame may be ſaid of Ahitophel his type.

WITH regard to the parable of the rich man, in the goſpel, who lift up his eyes in hell, being in torments. It implies no perſonal miſery there; but is one of the many ſtriking diſplays of *pure juſtice*, the ſanction

of the law, in awful terror. Such diſplays will remain forever, as I have ſaid before, in the full view of all the ſaints in heaven to all eternity. In the glaſs of pure juſtice, they will forever ſee, not only this Dives, but themſelves alſo lifting up their eyes in torments unutterable. And, in this ſenſe, will dwell with devouring fire, and inhabit everlaſting burnings. Though in their ſurety, they ſhall perſonally find a place of defence, a munition of rocks, the bread and ſure waters of eternal conſolation.

I READILY grant, if this diſtinction, which I would every where keep in view, between the voice of juſtice, and that of mercy, the diſplay of law and that of goſpel, running through the whole word of God, is without foundation, my whole argument falls to the ground. So does the whole of divine revelation, for ought I can poſſibly diſcern, after a moſt careful inquiry, for many years. And (with awful reverence I would ſpeak it,) I am not able, without this diſtinction, to vindicate the holy bible from many more flat contradictions, than any other book I have ever read. But this diſtinction is the peculiar glory and myſtery of divine revelation.

WE are expreſsly told, that even a brother for whom Chriſt died, may *periſh*. 1. Cor. viii. 11. This is a term uſed for eternal miſery, by the *limitarians* themſelves, as much as the word *damnation*. The meaning is certainly no more than this: He may fall into ſnares of infidelity, into many doubts and ſorrows in this world; may loſe all goſpel

conſolation, and become a miſerable creature, all his days on earth.

Moreover, what our Savior hath ſaid concerning children, greatly confirms the opinion, that he gave his life "a ranſom for all," in the moſt natural ſenſe of theſe words of the apoſtle.

The greater part of departed human ſouls have left the body, having never arrived at the age of maturity. Chriſt tells us, "of ſuch is the kingdom of heaven." Plainly ſignifying, that a great proportion for whom he died, are of this deſcription. And he does not at all limit his words to the children of his peculiar people, in preſent knowledge of his covenant, and preſent enjoyment of the privileges and comforts of it. This ſhews that he is the Mediator between God and man, in general, without any exception or diſtinction as to final ſalvation.

The paſſage I have alluded to, may alſo carry in it this idea, viz. That all who enjoy heaven, have a meek, humble, dependent, child-like ſpirit given them. This may be one thing ſignified thereby; but this militates not in the leaſt againſt the conſtruction I have given, as the main import of the words of Chriſt; but is compatible therewith, and the rather confirms it. We hope for the ſalvation of children of the covenant, dedicated to God by his ſpecial ſeal. The ſame merits of Chriſt, and the ſame power of ſanctifying grace, are as adequate to the ſalvation of all the little ones in the world.

We all fell in our firſt fœderal head, without our knowledge or act in the caſe; and all mankind are reſtored in the ſecond fœderal head in like manner. Otherwiſe grace does not abound *much more;* but indeed *much leſs.* This idea of the kind Parent of all, gives us a father's conſolation when we follow to the grave our dear children, who are often ſwept away by death in ſuch multitudes. Read Jeremiah xxxi. 15, 16, 17. We can yet ſay, "the Lord is good unto all, and his tender mercies are over all." No infant in the world was ever exempt from the mediatorial love of him, who *took little children in his arms and bleſſed them.*

Much is ſaid about being fit to die. There is one fitneſs and but one, and that is by no means perſonal; but in the perfect character of a Covenant Head, a Vicar, or Surety, in the full atonement, and all perfect worthineſs of Jeſus. Whatever difference progreſſive grace may make between mankind in this life, (and great is the bleſſing of all thoſe who are elected to ſpecial attainments of grace in this world) yet every one without diſtinction, is left utterly unfit for heaven, ſo long as the ſoul is in the body, an awful unclean thing. No unclean thing ſhall enter into that world. On the ſeparation, and not before, is any ſoul in its own temper and qualifications fit; but in a relative view, all for whom Chriſt died, are ſo. Their garments are all alike waſhed and made white in the blood of the Lamb.

What was done for David, Daniel and Paul, at the moment of ſeparation, that they might enter paradiſe with ſpotleſs purity, was of the ſelf-ſame nature, and not twice ſo much in degree, as might qualify Pharaoh, Ahab, and Judas for the ſame world: For no man on earth, to his laſt breath, was ever yet ſanctified to the one half, or ever made progreſs in holineſs one half way from a ſtate of total depravity, to a ſtate of complete holineſs.

My reader if you are left as you are found at your laſt breath, you muſt know that your ſoul will be too unclean for heaven, or elſe you know very little of yourſelf. In Chriſt, all things are ready for all, and equally ready at all times, without any conſideration in the univerſe, but what is drawn from God alone in a glorious, all ſufficient Mediator. God is all in all, and Chriſt is all in all. Thus the primitive preachers of Chriſt warned *every man*, and taught *every man*, in all wiſdom: That they might preſent *every man* perfect in Chriſt Jeſus. Col. i. And I am bold to ſay, that any child of Adam that truſts to any diſtinction in his own heart or life, in the leaſt to ſupport the heart in a dying hour, or to any thing but Jeſus Chriſt alone and him crucified, *ſhall be all his life time ſubject to bondage through fear of death;* and, thus abiding, ſhall find no relief, until the departed ſpirit is taught better, in the arms of him who has the keys of hell and of death. The notion of ſome fitneſs in a ſinner for heaven, whether a penitent or an impenitent ſinner, is utterly re-

pugnant to the whole word of God. It is built wholly on a legal ſpirit, and on our attachment to the old covenant of works. It wars againſt every evangelical motive of comfort in our ſouls, and obedience in our lives. It ſtands in oppoſition to an intire dependance on God in Chriſt, and to every moral virtue. Hence we do not allow God his proper character and place, nor take our own: "We obſerve lying vanities and forſake our own mercies."

It is an evidence of the true goſpel: That when it is impreſſed on the heart, it makes men better in their morals than before.

The *limitarians* urge this argument againſt all the cavils raiſed from the doctrines of God's decrees, of free ſovereign grace, and of the certain perſeverance of believers. And they have ever well maintained their ground, by dint of reaſon, experience and divine revelation. The doctrine I plead for, takes full advantage of every argument they adduce, and enforces them all with vaſt additional ſtrength. They ſay, and that truly, that the diſplays of God's mercy and love, always draw the heart to love God, and to keep his commandments. How much more ſhall theſe more glorious and extenſive diſplays of the love and mercy of God, in the ſelf ſame way, melt the whole ſoul into the obedience of love, and produce every moral virtue in the life of man?

The queſtion is not, what will be the influence of this doctrine on thoſe who do not

believe it, but on thoſe who do ? We know that every goſpel doctrine is turned to bad account, by impenitent, unbelieving men. They all turn the grace of God into wantonneſs; while true believers are purified by their faith, and led into all holineſs of life. There is not one objection of licentiouſneſs againſt this doctrine, which does not lie, in full force, and much greater force, againſt every *limitarian* doctrine of *free, ſovereign grace.*

They who have built on the higheſt principles of ſovereign grace, and have moſt of all ſet at nought all fitneſs in men for ſalvation, but in Chriſt alone, have ever been the moſt moral and virtuous in their lives: While, on the other hand, they who could not endure a thought of the abſolute decrees and ſovereignty of God, and ſalvation by mere mercy in Chriſt, excluſive from every qualification in man, to move the heart of God towards him; and have plead for power and merit and free will of their own creating, have too often been a diſſolute, abandoned part of mankind. The higher thoughts men have of God, and the lower of themſelves; the better their morals always have been, and always will be. Therefore, as this doctrine, which I am ſupporting, carries theſe ſentiments to a much greater extent than any *limitarian* doctrine: So it will, if cordially believed, produce much better morals.

The *fear of puniſhment* after death, never

yet had any power to reſtrain an hardened ſinner from ſin; much leſs to make him love virtue.

The moſt abandoned in wickedneſs, in all ages, have believed in the doctrine of hell torments, as much as a hardened ſinner can believe any thing of the inviſible world. They have always been wont to allude to theſe torments, in their common converſation, as a matter indiſputable. They have hell and damnation in their mouths, all the day long. But did all this ever, in the leaſt, prevent their ſtealing, curſing, ſwearing, committing adultery, fighting with one another, or any horrid blaſphemy they were addicted to? Never in the leaſt. Now if any imagine the moſt extenſive doctrines of divine goodneſs will make hardened ſinners worſe than they now are; they have yet to ſtudy human nature, and the common ways of the world.

Give an old, veteran, profane ſailor, a guinea in ſome ſpecial diſtreſs he is in, and he will not uſe a bad word if he knows it will offend you. But threaten him with eternal damnation for his ſin, and tell him his preſent diſtreſs is juſt upon him, and he will curſe you to your face. Men ought indeed, to be deterred from ſin by fear of hell: For hell in an awful degree and the pains of it attend all ſin; and the eternity of hell torments can be avoided in no way, but by forſaking ſin, no more on my plan than any other. But *ought* is one thing, and *fact* is another. Whatever hardened

ſinners ought to do, and from whatever motives ; I ſay, it is fact in all ages, the world throughout, that they never did mend their ways, from a fear of any thing in the inviſible world. It has ever been fact, that when they have had moſt of hell and damnation in their mouths, they have gone on moſt daringly in their wickedneſs.

It is readily granted, that awakened ſinners, with whom the ſpirit of God is on his uſual way to bring them to a ſenſe of the ſalvation of God, will be much reſtrained from all immorality, under ſuch ſpecial awakenings; yet all theſe will not bring them into the love and practice of holineſs and virtue, as will a ſenſe of the love of God's redeeming love. Under all theſe legal awakenings and reſtraints from open vice, *they will only change their mode of ſinning*, until the grace of God that *bringeth ſalvation*, appears to their ſouls : Which alone will effectually teach them to deny all ungodlineſs and every worldly luſt. But then, let it be well noted that the doctrine I plead for, ſecures every advantage and reſtraint of awakening grace, as fully as any *limitarian* doctrine ever did, or can. I maintain the ſame doctrine in the true nature of it ; the ſame neceſſity of conviction and converſion, that they do. We differ not a ſingle atom, as to the way and manner of application ; but only in this, I extend the glorious work of God, and every good influence of it, much further than they do.

From viſible, ſenſible ſhame and puniſh-

ment, in this world, the hardened and moſt abandoned are laid under very great reſtraints, without which they would be wholly intolerable; but none, none at all, from all you can tell them of an eternal hell. As for theſe viſible reſtraints, none can plead for them more than I; as will appear in its proper place. It may however be obſerved, that all the conduct of ſinners, under the utmoſt power of their reſtraints, is wholly deſtitute of any holineſs, or real virtue in the ſight of God. Their open ſin in the ſight of the world, is much leſs than before; and there is a good token, that the ſpirit of God is on his uſual way to bring them to ſaving good. There are reaſons enough in oppoſition to ſtupid ſecurity and open wickedneſs: Yet, ſtill the ſoul of one unregenerate ſinner is no more recommended in itſelf to the mercy of God, than that of another. This mercy is "unto all, and upon all them that believe; for there is no difference." Rom. iii. 22. Antecedently there is not a diſpoſition, or thought of the heart, or action in the life, but what is not of faith; and conſequently ſin.

THE view of divine love, of Chriſt and ſalvation, as is here repreſented, is the true and only ſource of *goſpel charity*, ſo much recommended in the word of God.

WE are taught to love all mankind, and to pray for the ſalvation of all, and to do all we can to promote the ſalvation of every human creature; as the goſpel hath ever

been, is, and ever will be preached to every creature under heaven, in a more direct and clear, or in a more indirect and obscure manner, as I have shewn before. But how can you pray for the salvation of all, if you believe it is the fixed will of that God, whose attributes and will are infinitely dear to you, that most of mankind shall go to eternal, personal misery? You love God better than men, and his will more than all the happiness of creatures; how can you feel any dispositon to have all men saved? And how can you pray in opposition to the desire of your heart? Or how can you love all mankind when you believe that most are infinitely hateful to God and Christ, and always shall be? How do your will and affections correspond with the will and affections of Christ in such a case?

You are strictly charged to hate nothing in any man, but his sinfulness; *to love the person and happiness of every one.* You may hate the wicked with perfect hatred, only as God does, and as David did, accounting them the enemies of God, i. e. so far as they are so. And thus far, and in this sense, you may hate all present believers, and even your father and mother, wife and children, brethren and sisters, yea and your own self also. This is consistent with a sincere love to your own salvation, and that of all mankind. But, how can you desire that blessedness and extent of salvation, which the highest object of your love oppoſeth, with an eternal, immutable, holy, and good pur-

poſe of mind? I ſee no way to warrant ſuch deſires, exertions and prayers of ours in all this extent, but the warrant Paul hath mentioned, viz. *God will have all men to be ſaved*, and, firſt or laſt, in his own way and time, to come to the knowledge of the truth; and becauſe Chriſt *gave himſelf a ranſom for all*: A glorious truth to be communicated to the world by degrees, as infinite wiſdom ſees fit: A teſtimony to be exhibited in proper times and meaſures. On this warrant, the way is open and clear, to love all; to pray for all; to ſeek the ſalvation of all; to exerciſe kind and tender affection for all poor ſinners in the world; becauſe God hath ſo loved the world, and Chriſt hath ſo loved the world.

THE love of God will make us love all as he does, according to our meaſure of love, and to be co-workers together with God. A principle of this nature moves tender affection in all other caſes. You have a very dear, earthly friend, that is abſent afar off, who has left a little child with you. The remembrance of your friend, and how he ſet his affections on that child, and what tender concern he continually has for the child, will affect your heart with tenderneſs, pity and love, every time you look on the little helpleſs creature; even though it be, a perverſe child. The love of your moſt dear friend, will make you always exceeding kind to his child, as an object of his love. Your care will extend to his other property, leſs

valuable, which you have any concern with, or knowledge of. So, in the preſent caſe, when you ſee any poor, perverſe ſinners on earth, your love to God and Chriſt will cauſe your heart, on the true goſpel principle, to ſay, "My God made them in his love; and in his great love and pity he preſerves them. My dear Savior died for them, in the greatneſs of his love. God hath a deſire to theſe works of his hands. The heart of my beſt beloved even bleeds with compaſſion, love and pity to theſe poor creatures. My love to my Savior makes me feel towards theſe unworthy, miſerable objects, as he doth. He is exceedingly good to theſe evil, unthankful creatures; and the love of God conſtraineth me to feel towards them, as God and Chriſt do towards them and me." There is verily no other fountain of goſpel charity but this: No other principle that can make us feel towards the vileſt of ſinners, as God commands us. But this "charity believeth all things, and hopeth all things," certainly not excluding the capital point. This charity is the radical grace in the ſoul of man, and "the bond of perfectneſs."

Some, who have been full in the opinion, that Chriſt the Savior of the world, will finally triumph over all the power of ſatan, and all the ſins and miſeries of mankind, wholly deſtroying all the works of the devil, ſeeking and ſaving that human nature which was loſt; have yet ſuppoſed, that pain and miſery may attend many of the human race,

a long duration after death; even for ages of ages.* This they ſuppoſe neceſſary, to purge, humble, and ſubdue ſome ſinners; and make them fit for a pure ſpotleſs heaven, a pure ſtate of conſummate happineſs.

THE above ſentiment is without any reaſon, or any thing in divine revelation to warrant the ſuppoſition. All want purgation at the moment of death, as really as any one. Sanctification is far, very far from being complete, while the ſinner breathes, whether a penitent or impenitent ſinner. In both there is much unholineſs, while life remains. No unclean thing ſhall enter heaven; and, of certain conſequence, not the beſt ſaint, not any mere man that ever lived, as he was in the laſt moment of his life.

WHATEVER is done before, for us miſerable ſinners, it is certain, the moſt of all will be done in the parting moment, to ſeparate us from pollution, and fit us for glory. All then muſt go into purgation, if any: Though it were granted that a ſhorter period would ſuffice for ſome than for others; which is not true, as will ſoon appear. Hence the papiſts are quite conſiſtent with themſelves, though not with the goſpel, in ſending all to purgatory; without a decree of exemption, which, they ſay, is the pardon of the prieſt.

A SPECIAL work of Chriſt there certainly muſt be in death; or never one of the mere human kind can get to heaven: For the ve-

* εἰς τὰς αἰῶνας τῶν αἰώνων.

ry moment before we expire, the beſt do juſtly cry out, O wretched men that we are; we have a body of death, and who ſhall deliver us from it! We ſhall all be poor, wretched ſinners in that moment, whenever it comes, and under greater guilt then, than ever before, in ourſelves conſidered: For we ſhall continually add many ſins, and atone for none. The ſame infinite mercy, power, and faithfulneſs, which can then ſeparate one ſoul from all its unfitneſs for heaven, can another. Chriſt does but a ſmall part of his glorious work on any ſoul in this life. He graciouſly begins earlier with ſome than others; but he finiſhes with all alike, even at death. "The laſt enemy that ſhall be deſtroyed is death. I will make this laſt even as thee."

We are very plainly taught in the word of God, that every ſoul goes immediately after death, into an eternal, fixed ſtate; which never more admits of any alteration, but in progreſſive degree; the ſame in kind, unchangeable to endleſs duration. The ſpecial manner in which Enoch and Elijah went out of the world, does not make them differ from that of all mankind in this reſpect; viz. That they were both ſo far from perfect holineſs, the moment before their tranſlation, as to be utterly unfit for the pure glories of heaven. Yea, they were much more fit for hell, *in themſelves*, as neither they, nor any other man had ever arrived half way to ſinleſs perfection while in the body. Yet, it is ſure, they both went direct to heaven. The thief on the croſs was miſerably unprepared

for paradiſe, as long as he was dying; but when dead, he went there, with the human ſoul of Jeſus. Lazarus went as directly to that world when he died, as the rich man went, *in the voice of the law*, to hell, and as all go there, when they die, *in the ſame holy ſentiment of the law*. Paul deſired to depart, not for ſome AGES of purgation and humiliation, but to be with Chriſt; although he groaned under his body of death, more than under the dying pangs of his body. And there is every reaſon to prove, that all the redeemed ſinners, for whom Chriſt gave himſelf a ranſom, ſhall go there as immediately after death, as the poor, hateful thief.

WE are taught the ſame truth, from the early periods of divine revelation. All the uncleanneſſes mentioned in the moſaic inſtitution, and all the purgations there, repreſent, as all allow, our moral or ſpiritual pollutions, and our moral or ſpiritual cleanſing. A day there denotes oftentimes the day or ſeaſon of life, and the evening, death, or the cloſe of life. How many times is it repeated, that the polluted and the unclean, in a ceremonial ſenſe, though they waſh their cloaths and bathe themſelves in water, (denoting all the means of grace and ſanctification in this life) yet ſhall be unclean until the even? But it is ſaid of all ſowing ſeeds, in like caſes, that they ſhall be clean. Levit. xi. And in many other places, needleſs here to quote. Seed ſown and ſpringing up again, is a well known ſimile, denoting our death and reſurrection. "It is ſown a natu-

ral body, it is raiſed a ſpiritual body." So in the type alluded to, we die moſt dreadfully unclean; yet no unſafe conſequence ſhall follow, any more than it was unſafe to ſow polluted ſeed, for fear the pollution would not be taken out in the ground, and that the riſing crop would be all unclean.

THE human body goes into the grave an awfully polluted thing; but does not ariſe ſo. It is ſown in diſhonor and weakneſs, it is raiſed in honor and glory. Our bones will be full of the ſin of our youth, which will be buried together with us in the duſt; but will not ariſe with us, except in the holy voice of law: And in that ſenſe all mankind ſhall awake to ſhame and everlaſting contempt, and abide ſo forever; but in goſpel language and *certain effect*, all ſhall awake to everlaſting life. Sin lies down, but does not ariſe. "His bones are full of the ſin of his youth, which ſhall lie down with him in the duſt." Job xx. Sin and its attendants ſhall vex and diſtreſs the wicked as long as they live; and hurry them on in all its dreadful rage and malignity while they live. It ſhall even drive them to death, "to the king of terrors;" but no further.

THE utmoſt torment, for a long period, even for *ages of ages*, could have no more effect in humbling ſinners of the human, than of the angelic nature. The devils are no better, for their long continued anguiſh and pain. Afflictions in this world, do not make ſinners any better; but are invariably, only an occaſion of their growing worſe and

worſe, if the ſpecial, almighty energy of the divine Spirit does not attend them. There is not the leaſt intimation of the operation of the Spirit of God, or of any means of grace in hell; in whatever ſenſe any underſtand that awful ſtate, whether as a ſtate of real, perſonal ſuffering, or as the pure voice or diſplay of juſtice. The devils have been under theſe perſonal ſufferings, for a long time, and are no more humble than ever, no more fit for heaven. And had it been the decree of God, that all mankind ſhould be there in perſon with them, ever ſo long, they would grow worſe and worſe, through all ages of ages; for ought that their intolerable torments would do for them. Almighty power could create their hearts anew, even in hell, as eaſily as on earth. God has power enough to change the natures of all the devils there; but, he has not told us he ever will do it, and we know of no ſavior provided for them, or that ever will be.

UNTO us a Savior is born; unto us God's own Son is given; and he has been pleaſed to make known to us his decrees of infinite love and mercy. The love and kindneſs of God to man hath appeared, not by works of righteouſneſs which we have done, or can do; but by his mere mercy he ſaves man, by the waſhing of regeneration, and the renewing of the Holy Ghoſt, which he hath ſhed on us, on all mankind abundantly; though on different perſons and people, and in different ages and periods of

time, in a very different degree, as the great and holy Sovereign hath ſeen fit.

Upon the true, goſpel doctrine, that God will have all men to be ſaved, and to come to the knowledge of the truth: That the Lamb of God hath taken away the ſin of the whole world: That Chriſt is inveſted with regal power, as Mediator, to gather together in one all things in himſelf: That as far as ſin hath reigned unto death, grace ſhall reign through righteouſneſs to eternal life by Jeſus Chriſt our Lord: And that the laſt enemy he will deſtroy is death, crying in exalted triumph, O death! I will be thy plague: O grave! I will be thy deſtruction: On this plain goſpel doctrine, I ſay, it is wholly without reaſon or ſcripture, to ſuppoſe that the miſeries of man ſhall reach beyond death.

The conteſt between the Mediator and his grand adverſary, or the two oppoſite ſeeds, is very often, and very juſtly repreſented under the ſimilitude of a long war, or a long, obſtinate battle. It is every where affirmed that the Savior of the human race ſhall obtain the victory, and a full complete victory too. The adverſary ſhall ſucceed no further than to bruiſe the heel; which is not a wound that ſhall terminate in that death, *everlaſting, perſonal death*, which he aimed at. It ſhall admit of a cure. But the ſeed of the woman ſhall bruiſe the head of the adverſary; give a fatal ſtroke, where a bruiſe by almighty ſtrength is certain death; and

ſo far as we know, it will admit of no cure. Such will be the victory of Chriſt over the ſerpent.

When two armies go to battle, if the one, only with the loſs of an hundred men, ſlay ten thouſand of the adverſe party and take almoſt all the reſt priſoners with great ſpoil; we ſay there is a great and triumphant victory gained; yea, we are ready to call it a complete triumph, even though the victors loſe a few men in battle, and a few more are taken captives by the retreating foe. Juſt ſuch will be the victory of ſatan, upon the *limitarian* plan. The reſcued of the Lord will be only a very few, amidſt the general overthrow of mankind. Satan will obtain a great and awful victory, though not ſo intire and complete as he could have wiſhed: Not wholly without loſs; but almoſt ſo. Now is this like the repreſentation of the rencounter, the great conteſt, in which the Almighty Son of God hath engaged againſt his adverſary, and the grand adverſary of his dear offspring of the human kind?

The point ſatan aimed at, was to involve us all in death, temporal, ſpiritual, and eternal. Chriſt ſet himſelf in full oppoſition to the whole purpoſe of ſatan, that no evil, *none at all* on the whole, ſhould accrue to man from all the malice, and all the deadly works of the devil. Chriſt's aim was as extenſive as ſatan's; as good as the devil's was bad. He undertook with as much benevolence, as satan did with ma-

LICE. He aimed at no partial victory, much leſs at a reſcue of a very few, leaving the field and a triumphant victory to his adverſary.

THE Mediator, the Head of every man abundantly aſſures us, that his victory ſhall be complete. "I will ranſom them from the power of the grave; I will redeem them from death: O death! I will be thy plagues; O grave! I will be thy deſtruction: Repentance ſhall be hid from mine eyes." Hoſ. xiii. 14. So in Heb. ii. we find the union of Chriſt with human nature, *with every man*, as fully aſſerted as words can expreſs; together with the end of his undertaking, and of all his ſufferings. "That he by the grace of God ſhould taſte death *for every man;*" and "that through death he might deſtroy him that had the power of death, that is the devil;" and "that he might deliver them (without any exception mentioned) who, through fear of death, were all their life time ſubject to bondage:" Which is moſt of all the caſe of poor, diſtreſſed ſinners, who under conviction, feel themſelves, of all mankind, the leaſt qualified for heaven, and the moſt fit for hell: Indeed, all other ſinners alſo, tremble at a realizing thought of death. The great Redeemer ſpeaks without any, the leaſt exception, when he ſays, "ſhall the prey be taken from the mighty, or the lawful captive delivered? But thus ſaith the Lord, even the captives of the mighty ſhall be taken away, and the prey of the terrible ſhall be delivered; for I will

contend with him that contendeth with thee, and I will ſave thy children." Iſai. xlix. 24, 25.

THE Holy Ghoſt ſpeaks of man without any diſtinction, in words like theſe: "His ſoul draweth near unto the grave, and his life to the deſtroyers; if there be a meſſenger with him, an interpreter, one among a thouſand, to ſhew unto man his uprightneſs: Then he is gracious unto him, and ſaith, deliver him from going down to the pit, I have found a ranſom." Job xxxiii. Here it is moſt plain, that the diſcovery, interpretation, or diſplay of the Mediator's *own righteouſneſs* is the ſole relief of the guilty, without any the leaſt qualification or diſtinction in the ſinful creature.

THE holy ſcriptures every where abound with thoughts correſpondent to the paſſages now cited. There is nothing that looks like a victory of ſatan over the Son of man, in any part or degree; though it is well known, the whole human kind are the prize contended for. All is quite the reverſe. Chriſt rideth forth conquering and to conquer. "He hath led captivity captive, and received gifts for men, yea for the *rebellious* alſo, that the Lord our God might dwell among them." Pſalm lxviii. "For it pleaſed the Father, that in him ſhould all fulneſs dwell; and (having made peace, through the blood of his croſs) *by him*, to reconcile all things to himſelf, *by him*, I ſay, whether they be things in earth, or things in heaven." "For in him dwelleth all the fulneſs of the God-head

bodily; and ye are complete in him, who is the head of all principality and power." "Blotting out the hand writing of ordinances, which was againſt us, and took it out of the way, nailing it to his croſs; and having ſpoiled principalities and powers, he made a ſhew of them openly, triumphing over them in it." Col. i. and ii. The holy ſcriptures every where announce, not only ſome benefit to mankind by Chriſt, a ſmall, partial reſcue from miſery; ſome valuable ſaving to the human kind; but a redemption, a victory over *ſatan*, *death*, and *miſery*, FULL, COMPLETE, and ETERNAL.

IT is utterly impertinent for any one to ſay, that this victory may be ſo complete, and yet moſt of the human race, or indeed any of them, may be in perſonal miſery to endleſs duration: And that God may have his own full glory, and the moſt benevolent ſyſtem may be eſtabliſhed, notwithſtanding. We muſt attend to the very thing contended for by ſatan, on the one part, and by the Son of God on the other. On the part of the adverſary, the matter contended for, is the intire, complete, eternal, univerſal miſery of all mankind: The Son of God does flatly, and fully oppoſe ſatan, in this very thing. Otherwiſe there is no war between them. i. e. if the devil is driving at one thing, and the Savior oppoſing another. But the oppoſition is direct and full; as above ſtated.

SUPPOSE ſatan to ſay, "I will have the human kind miſerable with me to all eternity:" And Chriſt to ſay, "So you ſhall,

moſt of them ; but I will have my glory in it." Here is concurrence in the main. The variance and oppoſition is very ſmall. But we know, that the ſeed of the woman does oppoſe ſatan, *in full ;* and will not let him gain that very point he aimed at, either in whole, or in any part : Hence, he makes even the pains of this life, and natural death, not only to turn to his own glory, but to the real advantage and happineſs of man. Satan never ſo much as hoped, or in the leaſt aimed to obſtruct the happineſs or glory of God; for he always knew it was utterly impoſſible for him to do it, in the leaſt degree. The complete, eternal miſery of all mankind was the ſole point he aimed at ; and this is the plain ſcripture repreſentation of the matter. The Savior fully and flatly oppoſed him in that very point ; and this alone can make a proper war, a true and direct contention. The Meſſiah did not ſay to ſatan, " You ſhall have your will in the main, and I will have mine too :" But " you ſhall not have your will at all, and I will have mine wholly." " I will overcome and conquer you, on your choſen ground, on which you contend to make all the human kind forever miſerable. The human kind ſhall be as happy, as univerſally ſo, and even more completely ſo, than if you had never determined on their ruin." This is a proper oppoſition ; and in this the Almighty Savior will be victorious.

But alas ! the *limitarian* plan gives ſatan a grand victory and triumph, in all he had

in view, or ever had any hope to accomplish. It considers Christ as concurring with him, *in the main*, in all that he desired; though, in another way, getting glory to himself, and making the victory and triumph of satan only an occasion of it. Here is very little opposition. The devil has got his will in one thing, and the Savior in another. Satan expected, in his most sanguine hopes, little more than what he will obtain; and Christ never meant to make any *great opposition* to the devil, while seeking whom he may devour; though in another way he would secure his own glory. Consult the sacred oracles throughout, and let common sense say, whether there is any thing in all this, that bears the most distant likeness to the direct and full opposition, between the seed of the woman and the serpent contending *for one and the same thing*, even human happiness.

Satan shall not finally have his will in the least part, or degree; though for a season he may be gratified: For divine wisdom and goodness have ordained, that there shall be a long contention, and the war not soon over. Yet, in the end, satan shall be wholly overcome and disappointed in every view, and in every hope that he has entertained. The prize in contest may be divided for a time; and satan may seem to have the greater share of it. It has indeed been so ever since the fall, to this day; and may be so to the end of this present world. But in the result, satan shall lose *all*; and the Son of

God gain all, even the whole prize in dispute, and even destroy him that for a time, a long season, has the power of death. His victory shall be complete; though for a long time God divides him a portion with the great (adversary) and he divides the spoil with the strong. Since he hath poured out his soul unto death, and since God hath laid upon him the iniquity of *us all*, and he hath been numbered with transgressors, and bare the sin of many, i. e. as many as those, whose iniquities were laid upon him, even "US ALL," all the human kind; he will, in his own way and time, make the application sure. He will make intercession for the transgressors. Isai. liii. Not a word of exception or limitation is mentioned in the passages now alluded to.

THE word *many*, is often used in scripture to signify all the human kind. The resurrection of all the dead is expressed in the same manner. Dan. xii. Also the apostacy of the human race: "By one man's disobedience *many* were made sinners." Rom. v. Indeed it is the common language of scripture. The reader will multiply quotations as many as he pleases. The word *many* so used, is often explained by the synonimous term *all*; and often the plain sense and connection of the context so explains it. So in the passage above cited out of the prophet Isaiah, God laid on Christ the iniquity of *us all*, and he bare the sin of *many*, i. e. the same number, the whole number of transgressors;

and his effectual interceſſion ſhall be for juſt ſo many, in the final reſult.

The kingdom of Jeſus, in this world, hath ever appeared feeble, like a bruiſed reed and like ſmoaking flax; and the kingdom of ſatan hath appeared in pomp and power; but this will not forbid a complete victory on the part of the Mediator in the end. "He ſhall not fail nor be diſcouraged, until he have ſet judgment in the earth: And the Iſles ſhall wait for his law:" He will, in his own time, "open blind eyes and bring out the priſoners from the priſon, and them that ſit in darkneſs out of the priſon-houſe. I am the Lord, that is my name, and my glory will I not give to another, neither my praiſe to graven images." Iſa. xlii. 1.—16. Satan hath long led away moſt of the nations after images, and into various kinds of idolatry; but Chriſt will finally reclaim as many as ſatan hath deluded. "God will gather together in one all things in Chriſt." Yea, wherever "ſin hath abounded, grace ſhall much more abound." The matter immediately in conteſt is the weal or woe of the human kind.

"What can awake thee unawak'd by this,
"Expended Deity on human weal!"

It is, moreover, worthy of our ſpecial notice that throughout the books of Moſes, and indeed through the whole of the old teſtament, there is very little ſaid of bleſſings, or of curſes, of happineſs, or of miſery, but what is temporal and pertains to this preſent life, as every attentive reader of the ſacred

books will immediately recollect. And when the word *hell* is mentioned any where in the old teſtament, it very ſeldom, perhaps never, ſignifies any other than the grave, or ſtate of the dead in general. The curſes on the diſobedient are every where mainly ſuch as take place in this world, or terminate in the grave; ſo are the bleſſings promiſed to the obedient. Citations from the ſcripture would be almoſt endleſs, the reader has them in his own memory without number. How ſhall we account for this, but upon the ſuppoſition that no diſtinction ſhall remain beyond death, except a diſtinction in degree of happineſs, by the glorious Savior of all men?

SIN is an infinite evil in its own nature; and nothing at all ought, or can be ſaid in excuſe for it on our part: Yet, at the ſame time, it is not amiſs for us to know that we do not, *cannot* hurt God by it, or in the leaſt infringe upon his uninterrupted and infinite happineſs, or add in the leaſt thereunto by all our holineſs and virtue. We do much harm to our fellow men and to ourſelves by our wickedneſs, and much good by our virtues: But the eſſential glory and happineſs of God is untouched by both. "If thou ſinneſt, what doeſt thou againſt him, or if thy tranſgreſſions be multiplied, what doeſt thou unto him? if thou be righteous, what giveſt thou him, or what receiveth he of thine hand? thy wickedneſs may hurt a man

as thou art, and thy righteouſneſs may profit the ſon of man." Job xxxv. 6, 7, 8.

With regard to God Moſt High, his eternal, fixed will and choice was never yet fruſtrated in any ſingle inſtance, and never will be. This by no means excuſes ſin on our part. The mere nature of it is infinite guilt in us, in the firſt inſtance. Yet it is certain that every thing, every event in the natural and moral ſyſtem, does take place juſt, exactly, as God choſe and fixed in his immutable plan, before any creature had exiſtence. Saint Paul grants this, when the thought is ſuggeſted even with a view to a bad improvement of it. The apoſtle gives the proper character of God, as abſolute proprietor, abſolute ſovereign of all things, and ſets up his abſolute decrees and immutable plan, agreeably to the nature and perfections of ſuch a God. The objector then ſteps in and ſays, "why then doth he yet find fault, for who hath reſiſted his will?" Upon this doctrine how can ſinners be worthy of blame? Paul does not take back a ſingle word he had ſaid, but moſt ſolemnly reprimands the bold objector, who would on this ground juſtify his ſin; by holding up to his view the holy nature and character of Jehovah, as *abſolute proprietor* and *abſolute ſovereign* of all things; and he ſtill maintains the principle he had laid down, without the leaſt recantation. Rom. ix.

Much has been ſaid againſt this true and proper character of God, as fixing his own immutable plan, both in the natural and in

the moral ſyſtem, and ſeeing it executed through all the ſcenes of providence, from beginning to end, without the leaſt poſſible variation. But all is in vain. We never can get rid of it, unleſs we will rid ourſelves of the word of God, and of the plain light of nature, with all our juſt natural notions of the Supreme Being. We may even as well reject God himſelf, his very being, as to deny that all events were by him fixed and certain, in his own eternal, infinite mind, before creation began; or that God had infinite right ſo to eſtabliſh his own plan of operation. Paul maintains this point, and pleads only this, to ſilence effectually every objector, who would on this ground, juſtify the nature of ſin, when it is immediately known and plainly felt in the ſoul, to be, *in its own nature*, directly oppoſite to the nature and attributes of God. As though he had ſaid, "you ſinner, have not fruſtrated the eternal plan of the Moſt High, it is true, and you never can; but it is enough for you to know that your will and heart has been ſet to do it. This very thing is your guilt, and there can be no guilt, no blame worthineſs in the univerſe, in any thing elſe; but in the evil will and diſpoſition, in its nature and operations. You therefore have merited unutterable puniſhment. But I will maintain the character of my God; if I relinquiſh this idea of JEHOVAH, I can find no Supreme Being."

I WOULD add: However wicked and unreaſonable it is to abuſe this juſt idea of God,

to indulge in ſin ; yet we may and ought to make a very comfortable uſe of it in another way. We ought not once to imagine that we have hurt the MOST HIGH in the leaſt, by all our odious ſins, as we hurt our fellow men and our own ſouls by them. God is infinitely happy in every thing that is done, every event, both in the natural and moral ſyſtem. The whole is juſt what infinite wiſdom and love decreed, and the whole forms the moſt lovely and benevolent ſyſtem, of all poſſible ſyſtems that were in the eternal, infinite view of Deity.

THE nature of ſin is, *in the firſt inſtance*, an object of ſorrow in our hearts ; but its *exiſtence, connections, and all its effects and conſequences* pertain to the pure and holy, wiſe and good government of the moſt high God; all whoſe ways are holy, juſt, and good. God need not puniſh poor ſinners, to retrieve any harm they have done him, any damage, any infringement on his happineſs. God is, and ever has been, and ever will be, juſt as happy as his ſoul hath choſen to be, i. e. infinitely ſo. With infinite pleaſure he ſees the operation of his own eternal plan, in every part and every movement of it. And mankind, in God's own time and way, will behold it as God does, and delight in it as God does, according to their capacity. We are in guilt and ignorance and ſorrow for a time, and all is juſt : For the will of God cannot be otherwiſe. But, as the nature of God is love, he will bring us all, "in due time," to ſee and approve of

his infinite wiſdom and love, in all his counſels, and in all his works. "What I do thou knoweſt not now, but thou ſhalt know hereafter." "In the latter end ye ſhall conſider it perfectly."

THERE have been, no doubt, many godly perſons that never could endure the doctrine of the divine decrees, in the *limitarian* ſenſe. The hearts of good people do not reject the abſolute predeſtination and decrees of God, nor ever did, ſimply conſidered, or juſtly conſidered. What our hearts revolt at, is the attributing ſuch decrees to God, as are contrary to his nature. "GOD IS LOVE." Attribute no decrees to God but thoſe of infinite love, in harmony with all the perfections of Deity, and they will ſet eaſy on our minds. Charge him with no decrees that are contrary to his nature, and they will all appear beautiful. But, when we conceive of a God exhibiting a nature and diſpoſition oppoſite to that of the great JEHOVAH; a God of ſome love and of great malevolence; and then conceive of ſuch decrees as ſuch a God would make, our hearts ſhudder at them. But decrees flowing from the true nature of the living and true God, are all lovely. All our hopes of happineſs are founded on the nature, attributes, and ſovereign will of the living and true God. His infinitely good diſpoſition ſecures us. His paternal love and goodneſs makes us ſafe; as all his natural perfections are exerted under the direction of his wiſdom and love.

COULD we ſuppoſe, I even ſhudder to

name the ſuppoſition, that JEHOVAH was in all things elſe as he now is; but only had a diſpoſition to infinite malevolence, as he now hath to infinite love and benevolence; poor ſuffering creatures could not even then impeach his juſtice, ſimply conſidered: For their whole beings, and all the comfort, and all the pain that could ever affect them, would be God's own abſolute property, to diſpoſe of, as he pleaſed. Their very feelings, of every kind and degree would be his abſolute property; ſince their whole being is ſo. But, alas! he would certainly act out his diſpoſition, and propagate miſery far and wide, and that to all eternity. My reader, is this your God? Have you learned that he hath indeed ſuch a diſpoſition of heart, from his works or from his word? Is this the Son of God that you have heard and thought ſo much about, that ſo loved the world as to die for the ſins of the whole world? Have you ſo learned Chriſt? To diſpute of *meum* and *tuum*, *mine and thine*, with Deity is utterly abſurd; but to hope and truſt in the nature, attributes, will and word of ſuch an infinitely good ſovereign, through the atonement of his own dear Son, is unſpeakably comfortable to miſerable, dying ſinners.

WE are taught, in the word of God, that all our backwardneſs in believing to the ſalvation of our ſouls, lies in the enmity of our hearts; at leaſt, that if this was all removed, we ſhould, under goſpel light, rea-

dily believe. The underſtanding, and all the powers of our ſouls would act in a ſaving manner towards God and Chriſt, if the temper and diſpoſition of our ſouls were right. This is certainly true. But our hearts are exceedingly oppoſed to God who is love. Therefore, until this enmity is removed, we cannot believe the doctrines of God's ſovereign, ſelf-moved love, pity, mercy, to ſuch horrible ſinners as we are.

When we hear the pure doctrines of free grace, our hearts ſay, "this is too good news to be true." Mankind, in a ſtate of nature, find no ſuch diſpoſition in themſelves, nor in other men like themſelves; and they do, and will imagine that God is, in this regard, "altogether ſuch an one as themſelves:" and ſo cannot believe there is any ſuch ſelf-moved love and mercy in God. They cannot forgive their enemies before they repent, and reform, and become their friends, and make all the reſtitution in their power; and hardly then. They will maintain ſome grudge after all. Therefore, they will not believe "that while they were yet enemies, in due time, Chriſt died for them," and paid their whole debt, while they were in all their enmity againſt God: And juſtified them, as to the law of God, while they were ungodly, working not in any manner acceptable to God, but wholly in enmity againſt him: And that "being juſtified by his death, they ſhall much more be ſaved by his life." i. e. By his almighty all gracious mediation, applying the benefit of purchaſed pardon and

ſalvation, by giving them repentance, faith, holineſs, and fulfilling in them all the conditions, in his own way and time. They cannot believe, that "God hath exalted him a Prince and a Savior, to *give repentance* as well as remiſſion of ſins:" That "he that ſpared not his own Son, but freely delivered him up for *us all*, all ſinners, will much more with him freely give them all things." They have no ſuch diſpoſition themſelves; but quite the reverſe: and they cannot believe that God has, when he ſays, "I, even I, am he that blotteth out your ſin for mine own ſake." They cannot receive this ſaying; becauſe, all they know of the temper of their own hearts, and of other men is directly oppoſite to ſuch free love and ſelf-moved mercy.

A SENSE of divine love, or charity, is never impreſſed on the hearts of ſinful men, but in an almighty work of regeneration, making them feel, in ſome degree, the ſame temper and ſpirit. When they can forgive their moſt malicious enemies, and love them, and ſincerely wiſh them all good, and pray for them, before they become any better, or aſk any pardon at all, as Chriſt did, and as Stephen did; then they can believe that there is ſuch an heart in God as his word does teſtify.

A YOUNG man that has been brought up in the family of a nobleman of vaſt wealth, who has always been a great benefactor to him, and whom he always loved moſt ſincerely, and ſerved moſt faithfully, giving

every teſtimony of love, fidelity and obedience, during his minority; well knowing that his benefactor always had the kindeſt ſenſe of his filial love, duty, and obedience, will, when he comes of age, eaſily believe the report, if it be told him, that the nobleman has given him a valuable legacy, in his laſt will and teſtament. But, a young man that was under the like advantages, who yet always hated his benefactor, rebelled againſt him continually, mocked him every day, reviled him in all his converſation, did all he could to kill him more than a thouſand times, and finally purloined all his goods that he could lay hands on, and ran away from him, and continues to hate him worſe than ever; would by no means believe the report, ſhould the ſtory paſs, that the ſaid nobleman had given him a fine eſtate. His own ſenſe of guilt, enmity, and ingratitude, would repel any idea that the news could be true. Juſt ſo, the glorious teſtimonials of God's infinitely free love and mercy, come to ſinful men. The bleſſed goſpel is oppoſed by them, on every ground and motive of enmity and unbelief, which can ariſe from a conſciouſneſs of the utmoſt diſaffection in their hearts to an holy God, and the moſt awful rebellion of their whole lives againſt him.

THIS doctrine of infinite, univerſal, ſovereign grace, flowing wholly out of the nature and diſpoſition of God to mankind, is

wholly conſiſtent with his rewarding every man according to his works; and is the only doctrine of ſalvation that is ſo.

The *limitarians* themſelves, have always underſtood this doctrine as relating, not only to the different degrees of happineſs among the ſaved, and the different degrees of miſery among the damned; but alſo *principally* to the great difference in the eternal world, between all who are ſaved, and all who are damned: Each deſcription being compared with the other, or the ſaved compared with the damned. And this is certainly the true goſpel ſenſe of the declaration, ſo frequent in the word of God. But then we ought to underſtand the word of God aright, as to the true meaning of *ſalvation* and *damnation*. Which cannot be, in any other ſenſe than what I plead for, conſiſtent with that proportion of reward which is aſſerted.

No *limitarian* on earth will preſume to ſay, that believers in this world are as much better than other ſinners, as heaven is better than hell: Or that there is, or ever was, ſo great a difference in moral character, between any two men on earth, as there is between heaven and hell. There is not a man on earth, nor ever was ſince the fall, that can juſtly claim a better character than that of a *believing, penitent, abominable ſinner*. We do not ſuppoſe that the beſt on earth have got half way from the worſt character they ever had, before converſion, to that character which ſaints in heaven ſuſtain. It is certain

that Job, David, and Paul, did not think they had. "I abhor myſelf, and repent in duſt and aſhes." "There is no ſoundneſs in my fleſh, becauſe of thine anger, neither is there any reſt in my bones, becauſe of my ſin." "My wounds ſtink and are corrupt becauſe of my fooliſhneſs." "I am carnal ſold under ſin." "O wretched man that I am, who ſhall deliver me from the body of this death!" "Not as though I had already attained, either were already perfect." Thus ſpake theſe men, diſtinguiſhed by the moſt eminent attainments in this world; and that without any compliment at all. They ſpake the truth, as they felt the real weight of it in their own ſouls. Theſe are true ſpecimens of the beſt men, and beſt moral characters that ever were, or will be, on this ſide death. Now let theſe three men go into the infinite and everlaſting joys of heaven, (and no doubt they are there) and contraſt with them the three vileſt moral characters, that ever exiſted ſince the world began, gone away into the infinite and endleſs torments of hell, in the *limitarian* ſenſe; and then ſay, my reader, is there not a greater difference between the reward of theſe, than there was between their works in this world? All may be in heaven, and yet the difference of reward be as great there as that of character here. In no other poſſible way can the proportion take place according to ſcripture.

'If believers, in this life, were as holy as they are in heaven, and unbelievers altogether as bad as the devil; yet even then, there

would be no proportion of reward to their works, on the *limitarian* plan, unleſs they had been one eternity *a parte ante* (as the language of the ſchools is) before they went into another eternity *a parte poſt*. The time of works, or of exhibiting a moral character in this life, bears no proportion to eternity. Duration, or long continuance in good or bad works, no doubt, hath its due conſideration in the reward; but temporal, momentary works bear no proportion to an eternal reward either of happineſs or miſery. Do not miſunderſtand me here. I mean not in the leaſt, to countenance the idle notion of thoſe who ſay, "becauſe ſin is but temporary in this world; therefore it is not ſtrictly juſt that its puniſhment ſhould be eternal." I have before exploded this idea. I am now ſpeaking only of the *proportion* mentioned in the goſpel, between the rewards of mankind in a future ſtate; not of the juſt demerit of ſin. I ſay, it ſeems exceeding plain, on the *limitarian* plan, there can be no proportion at all between the rewards of the elect, and reprobate, as meaſured by their different works in this life. All in themſelves deſerve an eternal hell, no doubt; but God has been graciouſly pleaſed to aſſure us, that the ſtate of each man in the world to come, ſhall be in proportion to his works here. This never can be, if ſome great ſinners, who ſinned all their lives here, yet believing ſinners, are in the next life conſummately and eternally happy; and other poor, miſerable ſinners, that is, unbelieving ſinners, are made con-

ſummately and eternally miſerable. Both deſerve it. But we are now availing ourſelves of God's own declaration of ſovereign goodneſs in the goſpel. I know, and I have already ſaid it again and again; that the law thunders eternal, certain damnation to ſinners, and it is the awful voice of juſtice throughout the ſacred oracles from beginning to end; but there is not one word of goſpel, glad tidings, or good news to ſinners in all this: It is all law, *pure law*, glorious law, denouncing what, *in pure juſtice*, ought to be. There is not a ſingle word of the goſpel in the whole of this, in all theſe dreadful thunders. The goſpel mildly and ſweetly announces that all theſe dreadful things have taken place in Chriſt, the *head of every man*. And now he hath full power and commiſſion, to apply his own redemption, to all thoſe of whom he is the head, and for whom he died; and that in his own time and way.

We all know there will be different rewards in heaven, according to different characters and works in this life. None will be rewarded *for their works*; but *according to them*. It will be ſo with all mankind that ever lived or ſhall live. They will, every one of them, bear a proportion to each other, *as to their ſtate in the eternal world*, as they did in their *reſpective characters and works* here. This never can be, without the univerſal triumph of Chriſt over ſin, death and hell, and all the condemning power of the holy law, in taſting death for every man. We could eaſily ſee all this to be the true ſpirit of the

goſpel; if we only knew and felt within our own ſouls, that the great PARENT of the univerſe, as much exceeds any human parent, in love to his offspring, as he is a greater being than man; and that this is the real nature of God.

THIS bleſſed, goſpel doctrine gives us an admiring view of the wiſdom and goodneſs of God, in the appointment and ordination of his civil miniſters in the preſent world, to make this life tolerable, by the ſuppreſſion of vice and immorality: Eſpecially as ſecure, hardened ſinners are not at all reſtrained by the threatnings of eternal damnation, even though they deny not the awful doctrines they hear; but allude to the truth of them, by moſt profane and horrid imprecations, in their common converſation. Preſent, viſible puniſhments ſtrike them with dread, and greatly reſtrain them. A fine, a priſon, a whip, and a gibbet have great influence to ſuppreſs their enormities.

GOD has, in his infinite wiſdom and goodneſs, appointed his civil miniſters for good. Theſe powers are ordained of God, for this great and benevolent purpoſe, to be a terror to evil doers, and the ſupporters of thoſe that do well. It will give an exalted ſenſe of God to thoſe that know his ſalvation, to ſee all thoſe miniſters he has ordained for the good of mankind, executing their reſpective offices well, for the glory of his great name and the good of human ſociety, in puniſhing all tranſgreſſors with the utmoſt faithfulneſs and impartiality, according to

good and wholeſome laws; and in encouraging all the virtuous and regular in the community. We ought to rejoice that they who do all in their power to make their fellow-men happy, ſhould partake largely of that good, which they ſo much ſtrive to promote and communicate; and that they, who war againſt the happineſs of mankind, ſhould feel in a proper degree, that miſery, which, by their wickedneſs, they would bring upon all. God's glorious decrees of ſovereign, rich, ſelf-moved mercy to them at laſt, do not in the leaſt, excuſe them from the due reward of their deeds here; no, nor even thoſe that have already believed to the ſaving of their ſouls, when they backſlide and do the deeds of the wicked.

THERE are a great variety of juſt and terrible puniſhments from the hand of God's civil miniſters, that do, and ought to meet and oppoſe flagrant tranſgreſſors, in all their open wickedneſs in this world. Thoſe indeed have their viſible and ſenſible effect. The ſcourge and the gibbet are very terrible to thoſe that are wholly unmoved by every conſideration which does not apply to their ſenſes: And how wretched are daring ſinners in this world, by the juſt rebukes of heaven in this way! While they are hardened in vice, all conſolation ariſing from the final mercy of God is wholly ſhut out of their ſouls, juſt as much on the plan I plead for, as on any more limited doctrine whatever. The moſt glorious truth, without an heart-felt conviction of it, can give no

comfort. Theſe poor, miſerable creatures are juſt as we have been wont to ſay the elect are, antecedent to their converſion; not at all the more comfortable for their election, until they are brought to know the things freely given them of God. How miſerable in this life, are thieves, drunkards, traitors, murderers, and ſuch like! Every good law, and every good magiſtrate, and all good people oppoſe them with all their might, with one awful puniſhment after another, until many of them end their lives of fear, trembling and horror on a gibbet, awful ſpectacles of ſhame and reproach, and without any comfort in their own ſouls, from the bleſſed truth I maintain. For it will fully appear, that no man of the vile character I have been deſcribing, while with ſuch an heart, can derive any comfort from this plan of ſalvation; any more than any of the elect of God, on any ſuppoſition whatever, could have inward divine conſolation, while in a ſtate of nature, of unbelief, and utter impenitency. I ſay, how miſerable are ſuch poor creatures in this world! How full of ſhame and horror, when taken away by the arm of juſtice! And why ſhould we grudge them the mercy and pity of the Father of their ſpirits, on whoſe ſovereign grace alone we ourſelves are dependent for better conduct, and better circumſtances in this life; if he is pleaſed, in his infinite goodneſs, through the all-ſufficient atonement of him who died, not for our ſins only, but alſo for the ſins of the whole world, to give relief, everlaſting relief, to

theſe poor, trembling ſpirits, his own offſpring at laſt, even at the time when the ſoul, with infinite anguiſh and the moſt horrible expectations, is ſeparating from that body, from a union with which, it derived all its awful depravity.

If we have been more favoured in this life, by the ſovereign, diſtinguiſhing goodneſs of the common Parent of all, let us be exceeding thankful. We ſhould do well to remember, that, conſidering all the ſuperior degrees of God's free grace granted to us, againſt which we have alſo ſinned every day, and every moment, we may be as guilty in the ſight of God, as our poor unhappy brethren, that never have been bleſſed with that prudent foreſight, and thoſe reſtraints wherewith God has been pleaſed to favor us. We may well acquieſce in all the diſplays of divine juſtice which we ſee in this world, even in thoſe that are condemned to flee to the pit, and our hand ſhould not ſtay them. But, I think, we can give no reaſon why the blood of Jeſus Chriſt, which *cleanſeth from all ſin*, ſhould not ſave them in another world; which will not lie *full ſtrong* againſt every hope of our own ſalvation. If their ſins go beforehand to judgment, ours may follow after. An earthly tribunal affords but a miſerable deciſion to determine who are deepeſt in guilt, in the eye of the Omniſcient Judge.

We have exceeding ſtrong motives to religion and all moral virtue, drawn from views

of honor and prosperity, pleasure and joy in this life; and to deter us from the ways of wickedness, from the opposite consideration. *Cæteris paribus*, a man is always happy in this world, in proportion to that degree of true godliness and virtue which forms his real character; and miserable in proportion to the degree of wickedness that governs him. Also great, very great will be the distinction between such different characters to all eternity. Their reward will be as different, as their works have been. And this may be; yet both of them be in the same world there, as well as here. No man in this world, since the fall, ever had any heart but a bad one, *really and truly so*. "There is none good but one, that is God." No man ever did one good deed, in the strict sense of the divine law. "They are all gone out of the way; there is none that doeth good, no not one."

When we speak of the good heart of believers, and of their good and holy lives; and when we find these epithets in scripture, they are never to be understood in *strict propriety of speech*, but only in a *comparative sense*, i. e. *less wicked*, in the exercises of their hearts, as to the real matter of these exercises, than unbelievers are, or than they themselves were, in a state of unregeneracy. It is the same with regard to their good and holy lives: i. e. they are *much less wicked*, as to the matter of their conduct, than once they were, or than unbelievers ordinarily are. But it is certain, that, *in propriety* and

ſtrictneſs of ſpeech, no poſitive goodneſs belongs to any human character on earth; nor can this poſſibly obtain, unleſs ſomething be found as pure in all reſpects as the law of God, which is the only meaſure of poſitive moral goodneſs.

In real propriety of language, all men are great ſinners without exception, and ſome, as to the matter of their character and conduct, much greater ſinners than others. I ſay, *as to the matter;* for I ſhall conſider obligations, motives, aggravations, &c. in the ſequel. But in this all men on earth do now, and ever did agree, viz. "*the heart and character of every man, in the ſight of God, is an awful, unſpeakably bad heart and character.*" And there will be no reward to any in the next world, but a reward of free, ſovereign grace, through the atonement and mediation of God's elect Savior, the elect head of every man. All may be in heaven together in God's own time, brought there in his own way, with as great a diſtinction of reward *there*, as of character here. But if ſome are perſonally in hell, and others in heaven, to interminable duration; the difference of reward will be infinitely greater than that of character and works ever was.

All believers are abſolutely, poſitively, and perfectly holy, *in a relative ſenſe*, i. e. in Chriſt. But this hath no concern with their real character; and their works have no hand in all this. Their own perſonal character, and their works are juſt as far from having any conſideration in their juſtifying

righteouſneſs, as the character and works of thoſe who never heard of a Savior. They are juſtified *as ungodly*, by that righteouſneſs made known to the ſoul, by the medium of faith, which is unto all and upon all them that believe, for there is no difference. There is no difference, none at all, but what exiſts while the medium of faith and the means of application are ſuſpended: None as to the covenant of redemption: None as to the undertaking of Chriſt: None with regard to the purchaſe or faithfulneſs and promiſe of him, who came into the world, not to condemn the world; but that the world through him might be ſaved: None as to merit on the part of man, or any motion towards God in the heart of one man more than another: None, as to the eternal good purpoſe of God: In this, and every other ſenſe he is no reſpecter of perſons. The language of a God of infinite, ſovereign mercy, to his children partakers of fleſh and blood, and for the ſake of union with whom, his own Son took part of the ſame, is this, without any diſtinction; "I, even I am he that blotteth out your ſin, for mine own ſake."

VERILY there are all the diſtinctions among mankind, in this, and a future world, which the holy ſcriptures know any thing of, without our making any diſtinction, invented by the blindneſs of the human mind, and the great want of benevolence that is natural to man. Pride, and love of pre-eminence which is ſo dear to human nature,

will not let us reſt eaſy, but in a ſelf-exalting proſpect that a very few of us ſhall have the pleaſure, in the next world, to look down on the great body of mankind infinitely beneath us, and feeling our own happineſs much heightened, and our own glory much augmented, by the contraſt of their extreme miſery and ſhame. Do you feel this ſpirit, my reader? You had need take care, leſt, on your plan of limiting the Holy One of Iſrael, yourſelf may take the inferior rank among thoſe, whom you now view in proſpect with a future unutterable contempt.

WHATEVER difference, or *ſpecific difference*, if any prefer theſe terms, there may be between the grace given to one and another, in this life, the character, temper and ways of all the human race agree in many things more than they differ! "As in water face anſwereth to face, ſo doth the heart of man to man." Bring all the human race together, and their diſſimilitude will be very ſmall, in compariſon of their general agreement. A preſent believer hath indeed ſomething, which a preſent unbeliever hath not; and God knows what a *little ſomething* it is. His omniſcient eye ſees how awfully we all agree. He never yet ſaw a reaſon, or found a motive *out of himſelf*, to ſave any of us all. Had all mankind right thoughts of God, a real true knowledge of that glorious fountain of love, this would make ſalvation appear *common ſalvation*, as it did of old. Jude iii. And none would deny it, or even ſo much as wiſh the doctrine were not true. If that

knowledge of God, which all men are commanded to ſeek after above all things, would eſtabliſh us in this bleſſed truth, is not the foundation of it real, ſolid, and true? Or does our diſcovery and knowledge of things ſo glorious, give being to their own objects?

If mankind were wiſe enough to know in what way to find their greateſt intereſt, joy, pleaſure, and delight, even in this preſent life, they would certainly ſeek it and find it only in the ways of real piety and virtue, in the ways of true wiſdom. "Her ways are ways of pleaſantneſs, and all her paths are peace. She is a tree of life to all that lay hold on her; and happy is every one that retaineth her." All the happineſs of heaven conſiſts in true religion, in the higheſt perfection of it. If it is not happineſs as far as we have it, in the preſent world, it will not be in a future: For the nature of it is the very ſame, in whatever part of God's vaſt dominions we are. The nature, tendency, and concomitants of ſin are juſt the reverſe. If ſin is happifying in this world, it will be in the next; if it gives real joy and pleaſure here, it will there. The hell that the devils are in, and that all mankind deſerve, and are condemned to, by the law of God, is nothing but perfection of ſin, with its inſeparable connections and conſequences. Theſe remarks being admitted, we are prepared to reſume the thought before ſuggeſted; comparing one ſinner of the humankind with another. I have intimated

that there is a vaſt difference, in many *reſpects*, and yet in *one grand reſpect* none at all.

With regard to this preſent life, and our connection with human ſociety; and with reſpect to our own comfort or miſery here, there is very great difference between thoſe we call the beſt, and the worſt of men. The former do much good, and inwardly feel much comfort and real, ſolid pleaſure; and are, in the general courſe of the divine government, of all men moſt beloved, honored, and promoted. I ſay, *in the general courſe of providence;* for ſpecial times of perſecution and the like, I now leave out of the queſtion. In ſaying this, I ſay juſt what the word of God, in the general tenor of it, abundantly aſſerts, and what the general experience of all nations of the earth does abundantly confirm.

Even, in days of the moſt bloody perſecution, the real happineſs and joy of the godly is much greater than that of any other men. Whatever a blind, carnal world may imagine, there is in very deed a great, and moſt bleſſed reward of holineſs and piety, in the preſent life. "Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace, whoſe mind is ſtayed on thee; becauſe he truſteth in thee." "In keeping thy commandments there is great reward." "And who is he that will harm you, if ye be followers of that which is good?" "If ye obey and ſerve him, ye ſhall ſpend your days in proſperity, and your years in pleaſure." No outward circumſtances, or adverſe diſpenſations can poſſibly fruſtrate this

exceeding, real, inward delight and joy in the mind, in the ſoul, the ſeat of all rational and ſpiritual pleaſure. "As ſorrowful, yet always rejoicing: As having nothing, yet poſſeſſing all things." The real, ſubſtantial, ſolid pleaſures of believing, godly ſouls, have a baſis very different from all the emotions of the hearts of God's enemies, which deluded ſouls call pleaſure. They are always "like the troubled ſea, which cannot reſt, whoſe waters caſt up mire and dirt." Whatever falſe ſhew of happineſs they may make, in the eyes of the world, yet "there is no peace, ſaith God, to the wicked." There is truly as great a difference in the real, inward reward of the virtuous and vicious, the godly and ungodly, in this life, as there is in the different temper of their minds, and in the different ways in which they walk.

But now let us compare their deſert of puniſhment, in another world, *ſolely as it reſpects the law of God*, the great and only unerring and deciſive rule. We all agree in the following ratio of eſtimating the demerit of ſin in the ſight of God. We conſider the matter of it as one thing, i. e. how far our hearts and lives deviate from the law of God; and the obligations againſt which we ſin, as another. We compare theſe two together, and thence judge of the real criminality of a ſinner in the ſight of God. This is agreeable to reaſon and the word of God.

Let us ſet up two men, and try their guilt in the ſight of God, or in the eye of

his holy law, by the above rule. Pharaoh ſhall be one, and Paul the other. The former was a moſt horrible ſinner, in the eyes of all good people; the latter was one of the beſt of men, in the ſame view. Pharaoh did all the harm in his power, and his whole heart was in it. Paul, after his converſion, did much good, with a ſincere and pious heart. Thus far the difference of character is exceeding great, while we attend only to the matter of it. Next bring in the obligations. Pharaoh was, perhaps, leaſt of all mankind favored with tenderneſs of conſcience, or reſtraining grace. He was in all the groſs darkneſs of paganiſm, and God did indeed harden his heart, in a moſt ſignal manner, and that in a way conſiſtent with his own holineſs and purity. It is here quite foreign to the argument, to enquire into the manner how. Whether only by permiſſion, or otherwiſe, it is certain God did it. He was left under the leaſt obligations and motives to keep him from ſin, we will ſuppoſe, of any man that ever lived; and we will alſo ſuppoſe, and grant, that the matter of his ſin, in heart and life, was the greateſt of any man on earth. Paul, after his converſion, was bleſſed with the greateſt divine light (we will ſuppoſe) of any man on earth. His natural powers and education were exceeding good, with moſt eminent degrees of ſaving grace in his ſoul, abundance of ſanctifying grace, and an equal degree of divine joy and conſolation. And he ſerved God

in a moſt eminent manner. Yet he always ſinned in ſome degree, in his heart and in his life; he was never perfect one ſingle moment; far, very far from it, if we may believe his own inſpired teſtimony of himſelf.

Now, did not Paul's obligations and motives to holineſs, as far exceed Pharaoh's, as the matter of his character was better? What made him better, but his motives and obligations, ariſing from the light, grace, and ſpirit, freely given him of God? Yet his character was always very inadequate to the purity of God's holy law. All that made him leſs ſinful in heart, and life, was mere obligation from God. All light and grace, and every thing that hath this effect, is ſo. Multiply the degree of his remaining ſinfulneſs, as to the matter of it, into the degree of obligation and motive to which it was oppoſed, and what leſs will be the total amount, in the ſight of God, than that of Pharaoh? This abominable prince had obligations, againſt which he ſinned, many and great; as every man in the world has. But compare them with all that a ſovereign God did for the apoſtle, all his light and grace; the difference is exceeding great. God did as much more for Paul, as his heart and life were better than Pharaoh's. All he did for that eminent apoſtle was mere obligation on him, and the law juſtly required perfection of him: But he was always very far from it. Obligations on Pharaoh, i. e. light and grace, were as far withheld from him, by a holy ſovereign God, as

his heart and life was more ſinful than that of Paul. Perhaps my reader has not much attended to this thought in time paſt; but I think it worthy of ſolemn attention. I am ſure it runs through the whole word of God. This will account for thoſe moſt abominable deſcriptions, which Job, David and Paul give of themſelves, even in their higheſt attainments in grace, and after all their pious walk with God, and all the great good they had done in the world.

DESCRIPTIONS of this tenor, which the beſt of men give of their hearts and lives in holy writ, and which I have always heard the moſt eminent chriſtians give of themſelves, in their ſolemn and devout prayers, were ſurprizing to me, in the days of my early youth. I once underſtood them as humble and meek compliments, which they were diſpoſed to make to the Deity, or expreſſions entirely hyperbolical. When I ſo often heard the moſt godly miniſters, and other eminent chriſtians deſcribe their hearts and lives, in the preſence of God, bad enough for the vileſt and moſt notorious ſinners in the world, I uſed to wonder how they dared thus to compliment with an heart-ſearching God, who, I ſuppoſed, muſt know they did not ſpeak the ſtrict truth, and that they knew it themſelves. I did not ſo much wonder to hear a rich man own his poverty; or a delicate lady deſpiſe a fine entertainment, an excellent dinner, or ſupper ſhe had provided, in the preſence of her gueſts. Such compliments I thought might bear

having countenance from frequent cuſtom, and an appearance of humility and delicacy. But, I thought it quite amiſs to ſay that to the great, heart-ſearching God, which both the ſpeaker and the object of prayer knew was far from ſtrict and plain truth.

After long attention to the law of God, and the hearts and lives of men, and the obligations we are under to God, very eſpecially for every degree of divine light and ſaving grace; I am at laſt very ſenſible of the propriety of all ſuch confeſſions before God, and that they are wholly without a compliment. The phariſee in the parable was, no doubt, a man of pure and amiable character in the eyes of the world, and deſerved great honor and reſpect from man, for the good he had done in the community, by his ſhining virtues. But, when he was tranſacting the great concerns of his ſoul with his Maker, he might have prayed juſt as the ſcandalous, infamous publican did, and with good acceptance too.

Let beneficent, ſhining characters, the eminent benefactors of mankind receive great honor and reſpect from their fellow-men. Let them ſtand far diſtinguiſhed from the common people, and farther ſtill from all the vicious and immoral: But as they ſtand related to that holy law which conſiders every obligation men are under to perfect holineſs, as well as the matter of their conduct, I ſay, in this view, let every high thought and towring imagination be levelled with the duſt. Let every mountain and hill

be brought down, and the Lord alone exalted.

MANKIND have a ſpirit of monopoly. Nothing is more natural to them. If they have great advantages and honors in the eyes of others in this world, they are apt to inſiſt on thoſe diſtinctions before God, as an argument for eternal continuance. But, "the laſt ſhall be firſt, and the firſt ſhall be laſt."

THAT which is highly eſteemed among men, even all that men call good, in the human character, is ſo far from bearing the teſt of God's holy law, that it is, in that relative ſenſe, abomination in the ſight of God. Let the beſt man on earth plead the beſt of his heart and his life, as a ground of acceptance with God; and he ſhall find it an utter abomination. The atonement ſtands by itſelf alone and unmixed: "The Lion of the tribe of Judah, the root and offspring of David, and he alone hath prevailed." This glorious truth hath ever been deeply impreſſed on the hearts of the friends of God, in this world, and will be to all eternity. The blind, proud notions of mankind will have no place in heaven, as they have here. There they will know and feel that "the former things are paſſed away."

THE doctrine which I plead for, has a great tendency to afford believers adoring and ſubmiſſive exerciſes of mind, in view of all the ſin and calamity they find in the world.

THEY ſee that God has done nothing in-

conſiſtent with his infinite love, and his avowed character in his word, by introducing, in his holy providence, or permitting, if you pleaſe, all the moral evil that is in the world. It will all have a glorious iſſue, conducive to the greater manifeſtation of his infinite love, and all his amiable attributes, in the wonders of redeeming love. And in a view of all natural and penal evil connected in juſtice with the evil of ſin, the ſoul adores God and falls in lowly ſubmiſſion under all his holy rebukes. So, when we ſee ſo many miſerable creatures of our own kind ſtruggling with pain and calamity, through life, we behold them as Jeſus does, who died to ſave them from wrath to come; and our ſouls are filled with humble ſubmiſſion, and all the aſtoniſhment of devout love.

When we read of all the dreadful ſlaughters of the ancient inhabitants of the land of Canaan, and many millions more of God's own offspring like ourſelves, under all the horrors of maſſacre, by the expreſs command of the Father of their ſpirits, we ſhall yet ſay "God is love." He hath, in all theſe things given a due teſtimony of his juſtice, and his abhorrence of ſin. Yet it is not "the rod of an enemy, or the chaſtiſement of a cruel one:" God hath not forgotten that he is their own Father, by creation, and that creation is a dear child of his love. On this plan, we do not ſtumble at any thing he does; but feel theſe his words with believing joy, "as I live, ſaith the Lord, I have no pleaſure in the death of him that dieth." When we

think of all the awful and terrible judgments that have fallen on the trembling children of men, our own flesh and blood, it is well for us to remember what he hath said, who died for the sins of the whole world, "and I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw ALL men unto me."

LET it not be imagined here, that I would so much as intimate, that God is under any obligation to save men finally; because that, in the dispensations of his government, they have been very miserable in this world: Or that those who have been most so, have *in justice*, any claim of reparation on their Maker. I mean no such thing. I argue only from the nature and attributes of JEHOVAH, as they appear in his word and works. He is worthy to be God supreme, by his own infinite worth, by virtue of his own infinitely glorious and lovely perfections. He is *by nature* God, as some have well expressed it.

MY hope is founded entirely on his *nature* and *disposition*, through his own Son made manifest. In this manifestation, GOD IS LOVE. His moral disposition is infinitely amiable and inviting. It is the supreme joy of all holy, wise, intelligent beings, that there is such a God. His nature is the basis of all happiness, and the foundation of all hope. It is the source of all our comfort, that there is such a God over all, blessed forevermore; that he is Creator, Proprietor, and absolute Disposer of all things, absolutely sovereign and uncontrouled; and that he worketh all things according to the counsel of his own

will. *For his will flows from a nature infinitely glorious and lovely.*

We have no claim of juſtice on him who gave us our whole being, whoſe abſolute property we are. Whatever he does with us, he meddles with nothing but his own. Hence, I argue only from the immutable nature of God, infinitely perfect and good, and from his plain word and all his manifeſtations. I ſay, theſe do aſcertain the final redemption of a whole guilty world, or, that he will have all men to be ſaved.

Had there been an eternal, Supreme Being, Creator and abſolute Proprietor of all things, as Jehovah is; who in his *moral diſpoſition*, his *moral nature*, had been juſt the reverſe from what he really is. Horrible ſuppoſition! but lawful in the view I make it. Had he created innumerable myriads of rational creatures more than ever yet had exiſtence; and made them all conſummately ſinful and miſerable; and had we our place in that woful ſcale of beings, doomed to endleſs ſin, ſorrow, and pain unutterable: Even on this ſuppoſition, we could have no claim of juſtice, on our Maker, as we have upon our fellow creatures who injure us, and bring pain and miſery upon us. They take hold of property not their own, but ours, in oppoſition to their claim; and therefore we may in juſtice demand reparation of them. Not ſo is it with regard to the ſupreme Fountain of all being, who is the Creator and abſolute Proprietor of all things, including all the feelings and ſufferings of creatures.

Their very pains and all their affections are his property: For their whole being is ſo.

In ſuch an awful, lamentable caſe, as above ſuppoſed, we could never accuſe our Maker of injuſtice, with any kind of propriety. All we could ſay would be to howl, in doleful accents, to all eternity; "*the Supreme reigneth, let all creatures mourn; let the multitude of beings lament and bewail!* woe! woe! woe! to miſerable creatures, that ſuch is the nature and diſpoſition of him that ruleth over all." I cannot think we do any honor to the bleſſed Jehovah, in aſcribing to him a moral nature, in any wiſe ſimilar to this. One as oppoſite thereto as we can poſſibly conceive of, is indeed the very nature of that bleſſed Being whom we adore. God's will cannot poſſibly, in the nature of things, be unjuſt; and by *his own immutable nature*, it is infinitely good, and the ſpring of all bleſſedneſs and joy. Diffuſion of being and bleſſedneſs flows from the nature of God. This doctrine exhibits Jehovah, as the true God, whom angels and ſaints adore, "Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the ending, the firſt and the laſt."

If we carefully attend to the holy ſcriptures, we do not find any holy men inſiſting upon terms of limitation with God, as though they thought there could ever be in the diſpoſition, or will of God any poſſibility of doing wrong to them. They all appear to chooſe God ſhould be juſt as he is,

or as his own nature does diſpoſe and incline him ; and they know he ever will be ſo diſpoſed towards them. This is their happineſs ; and in this they put all their confidence. All their hopes ariſe from this ; although they have ever looked on themſelves as fit objects of eternal miſery, as any creatures that ever God made. His character is often, and with great propriety, called his name. Poor, penitent, believing ſinners repair to nothing elſe, nothing but his character and diſpoſition as manifeſted in a Savior, in whom only they are righteous. " The name of the Lord is a ſtrong tower : The righteous runneth into it and are ſafe."

It is truly for the honor of Jehovah, that we ſhould all know, that he alone is the abſolute ſource of all being and bleſſedneſs : That he is abſolute, ſovereign, and uncontrouled, in every view, no foreign influence of any kind or degree ever acting on him : That his creatures never can nor ſhall have any thing elſe to found their hopes upon, but his own glorious nature and ſovereign will : That his manifeſtations are all glorious and comfortable to every human ſoul, that underſtands and believes them : And that it is not the underſtanding and belief of a ſinner that makes them ſo, but they are ſo in their own nature.

No ſinner of mankind does God any honor, by believing that all his own hopes of pardon and ſalvation, depend as much on himſelf, as it is poſſible any thing can depend on a creature, viz. on ſome diſpoſition or

qualification in himself. This denies God his proper character, in his relation to sinful man. But to believe the blessed God has given qualifications as sure to unworthy sinners, in his own way and time, as he hath provided an all-sufficient Savior for a guilty world, is ascribing to God all his glorious attributes; "working all things (without the least exception) according to the counsel of his own will."

If the *limitarians* could be disposed to think, study and read as much on this point, as the writer hath done for many years past, with an ardent desire to find nothing but the truth to rest in; they would see that it does no honor to the great and glorious God to make eternal salvation, in the least, depend on any creature, as to the certain event of it. Indeed, all the powers of the soul are fitly exercised by a sovereign God, in his own way, in the application and enjoyment of all that flows out of the mere goodness of his own nature, in a way honorable to himself, by the substitution and mediation of the second man, the Lord from heaven.

I can find no plan of religion but this, that can ever warrant the great charity, and union among men, which is so much recommended in the sacred oracles. If we consider ourselves as distinguished from most of our fellow men, in the eternal purposes and views of God: That we are destined to his infinite, everlasting love, and most others to his hatred, wrath and vengeance forever-

more ; we ſhall hardly find it in our hearts to exerciſe that pity, and tenderneſs, love and good will to them, that the goſpel requires. If we think our God will be their eternal enemy, and delight himſelf in their eternal deſtruction; we ſhall hardly feel ourſelves friendly to our God, in loving and pitying all mankind, and ſtriving all in our power for their ſalvation. You cannot more diſpleaſe your fellow men, than by manifeſting great love and tenderneſs to their enemies.

Again ; In converſation, or in hearing the word preached, or in reading the multitude of good authors that have written on our moſt important concerns, we cannot upon any other plan, maintain goſpel candor. We ſhall find the light and communications of God to men ſo various ; and their channel of preaching or writing, in many reſpects, ſo devious from one another; that we ſhall be ready to ſcruple whether there is any truth in the doctrine of a ſpecial revelation from heaven. We ſhall fall away, at leaſt, as far as Deiſm. But, on the plan, for which I am pleading, the whole difficulty is obviated : As every writer uninſpired, every preacher may be wrong in many things, and ſome in many more than others ; yet all be eſſentially right. By them God communicates light and truth to the world, in various meaſures and degrees. Perhaps, it has not as yet been fit, in the ſight of God, in the former, or preſent gradations of divine communication, to enlighten any au-

thor, or preacher ſo, but that all have been involved in more darkneſs than they have ſeen of the true light. Hence ariſes great bitterneſs of ſpirit towards many, or univerſal ſcepticiſm. But on the gracious principles I am ſupporting, we can reſt contented, that the infinitely wiſe Being ſhould cauſe the light to dawn and increaſe juſt as faſt as his own wiſdom and goodneſs dictate. And we can love one another as the goſpel requires; though under various degrees of inſtruction, and under various modes of thinking.

THUS, if I read an author, or hear a ſermon which I look upon one half according to truth, and the other half not ſo; that part which is good, ought to ſet as well on my mind as if the whole was ſo, and I ought to love the writer, or the preacher, and bleſs God that they are enlightened ſo far as they are. This I take to be a goſpel ſpirit, and if ſo, it is according to the truth of the goſpel. It is for want of ſuch a ſpirit, that many will reject all that is good in an author or preacher, becauſe of the many miſtakes, or ſuppoſed miſtakes found in both. But, in good truth, if we will be inſtructed and edified by none, but thoſe who are right in all things, we deprive ourſelves of the whole benefit of inſtruction, or edification from any man uninſpired.

THE doctrine I am pleading for, is much in favor of goſpel love and charity, harmony and peace. This is one mark of the truth of it. The true tendency of this principle is

ſo far from diſpoſing thoſe who believe it, to contend and quarrel with the teachers and miniſters of the chriſtian churches, wherewith they are now furniſhed, that it will induce them to love them more than ever, and to treat them with all poſſible kindneſs. At the ſame time, we ſhall wiſh and pray, that it may pleaſe God to lead them further into thoſe glorious truths, which they underſtand but in part. Thus it will have that quiet, and peaceful influence among miniſters and people, which ſo much adorns the goſpel.

The true import of the initiating ſeal among God's covenant people, both in the former and preſent œconomy, confirms the doctrine which I am advocating.

The whole Jewiſh church, and the great body of chriſtians, who practiſe the initiating ſeal in infancy, have ever underſtood it to be a ſeal of the covenant of grace, to which even the infant ſeed of covenant parents, have a right, and are thereby ſealed in the covenant of grace and ſalvation; even though they have always allowed, that ſuch children are perſonally no better than the infants of heathen. An infant among the Jews, at eight days old, was ſuppoſed to be no better, *perſonally*, than any children of other nations; yet they were ſealed by circumciſion in the covenant of grace and ſalvation; even as they are now by baptiſm.

The church of God and the ordinances of it, from the days of Abraham to this day, were deſigned and inſtituted as a light or

lamp which God holds up in the world, to beam forth by degrees, and fully manifeſt, in due time, his purpoſes of mercy and ſalvation to a guilty world, through that Mediator which he appointed to take away the ſin of the whole world. Hence God hath commanded that all the infants of covenant parents ſhould be ſealed, though perſonally in the ſame unregenerate ſtate with the world in general, as a teſtimony that all were purchaſed by the common Redeemer of ſinners, and ſhould be brought to actual enjoyment of ſalvation, in the time and manner moſt fit in the eyes of infinite wiſdom and goodneſs. Hence any child of a pagan has right to the ſeal, if its lot is providentially among God's covenant people, and under proper circumſtances to be trained up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord.

Accordingly, the commiſſion given to the apoſtles, was, to go forth and teach all nations, and to command them to believe that divine truth which bringeth ſalvation, and to baptize all nations to whom they preached, both parents and children, (if they would ſubmit to it) as a ſeal of the common ſalvation. This was not a token that they had done, or ever could do any thing toward their own ſalvation; but, that Almighty God, Father, Son and Holy Ghoſt, had engaged to accompliſh the ſalvation of a guilty world, and had made all ſure, and would ſeal it by baptiſm.

We can, upon no other principle, make uſe of the ſeals and ſpecial ordinances with

any conſiſtency. How ſhall we ſeal, in the covenant of grace and ſalvation, perſons deſtined and decreed to eternal perſonal damnation? How ſhall we admit thoſe to the holy ſupper, a ſeal of our eating and drinking with Chriſt, at his table, in his heavenly kingdom, who may be, for ought we know, not only in an unrenewed ſtate at preſent, but alſo under an irreverſible decree of eternal reprobation? Would the Moſt High, in any wiſe, allow his ſeals to be ſo uſed? God never would have ſet ſuch blind creatures as we are, about the work of admitting into the church, and exerciſing diſcipline, or to handle the ſeals of grace and ſalvation, had his own plan been a *limitarian* plan, or had he ſent his Son into the world on any other errand than that the world through him might be ſaved.

DISCIPLINE muſt indeed be kept up in the church; and the body elected to ſuch ſpecial and glorious privileges, out of a world, as yet buried in darkneſs, muſt be kept viſibly pure, as bearing a proper, viſible reſemblance to its pure and holy head. Thoſe members that do not bear this viſible reſemblance, muſt be delivered to Satan, yet only "*for the deſtruction of the fleſh.*" A dreadful thing it is, to be in a ſtate of excommunication from the privileges and conſolations of the people of God in the world; but there is nothing in it that affects the certainty of eternal ſalvation at the great day: For the expreſs end of every final cenſure on earth, is, "*that the ſpirit may be ſaved in the day of our Lord Jeſus.*" 1. Cor.

v. 5. Whatſoever is thus bound on earth, ſhall be bound in heaven, both as to its propriety and good tendency in this world, and its glorious iſſue in the world to come, even the ſalvation of the ſoul in the day of the Lord. Hence an excommunicated perſon is ſtill a brother, and not to be "treated as an enemy; but admoniſhed as a brother."

MANY ſouls for whom Chriſt died, have juſtly experienced the awful ſentence of excommunication from his church on earth: Even Moſes and Paul were willing to ſuffer the ſame, if it might redound to the glory of God and the ſalvation of ſouls. i. e. As moſt have underſtood them. Yet this doth by no means fruſtrate the irreverſible and extenſive plan of redeeming love, to gather together in one all things in Chriſt, and to make all men, in due time, ſee the glory of this myſtery, which for many ages and generations lay hid in great obſcurity.

GOD'S church on earth, his viſible covenant people were always deſigned, in his infinite wiſdom and goodneſs, as a lamp, a light to the world, a city ſet on an hill, to manifeſt and hold forth to a loſt world what God hath done for them, and what he would do. The church is a preſent, viſible repreſentation of divine love and mercy to ſinners, to a loſt world. The church holds forth to the world the glorious God with all his divine attributes and bleſſed purpoſes, and the Savior of all men, in all his glorious offices, and the Holy Spirit, in all his infinite and

almighty energy. "By the church is made known the manifold wiſdom of God." Eph. iii. 10. The church was not ſet up in the world, to ſhew us how much better ſome men are than others, or what a reſpecter of perſons God is, in his purpoſes and operations; but rather to witneſs that God hath concluded all under ſin, that he might have mercy upon all. Not to hold forth the worth and riches of any community of poor ſinners; but rather, the unſearchable riches of Chriſt.

ANOTHER argument againſt the *limitarian* ſcheme, is this: *No man*, on their principles, *can do his duty; even if his whole heart and diſpoſition were perfectly right.*

IT is our duty to acquieſce in God's will in every event. But an holy heart cannot do this in ſuch an event as his own eternal damnation, or that of any of his fellow men. The principal miſery of that eternal damnation they plead for, lies in an eternal, fixed and growing oppoſition of heart to an holy God, and the horrible rebellion proceeding from ſuch an heart. It is certain an holy and right heart, which is full of love to God, cannot feel willing to be thus at enmity with God, and hate and rebel againſt him to all eternity. It is equally certain, that an holy man, that loves his neighbor as himſelf, and values his neighbor's happineſs as his own, and is exceedingly averſe to any diſhonor done to God, any oppoſition againſt him, as much if it be in his neighbor as in him-

ſelf, cannot be willing that his neighbor ſhould thus hate and ſin againſt God to all eternity. If we do not ſo love our neighbors in all things as ourſelves, we fall ſhort of that perfect benevolence required of us.

Besides, the nature of this oppoſition to God is infinitely evil and odious, whether in ourſelves, or in any of the human kind. Hence if our hearts are right, we ſhall feel a great oppoſition to it, and can never be pleaſed with it, or reconciled to it. We muſt be exceedingly wicked, to be reconciled to ſuch great and eternal wickedneſs.

It is true, the redeemed will in the true goſpel ſenſe ſee the ſmoke of their torment aſcend up forever and ever, and ſhout Alleluia in the view of it; but this will be in the manner I have before taken notice of, only in the glaſs of *pure juſtice*, in the glaſs of the divine law. Thus they will eternally ſee all the human race, and themſelves as well as others, forever dwelling with devouring fire and everlaſting burnings; while, in *very fact* and in *perſon*, they ſhall from their munition of rocks ſhout Alleluia, finding the bread of life ſuſtaining their happy ſouls, and the waters of everlaſting conſolation made ſure.

It never can be found in a holy heart to take any more ſatisfaction in the rebellion of others againſt God than in his own; both are infinitely hateful to a ſoul obedient to God. The *limitarian* plan, if fully conſidered, and realized ſeriouſly in the ſoul, (which is very little done) can never meet with the

approbation of the friends of God. They will feel their hearts inclined like the infinitely benevolent heart of God, who will have all men to be saved, and to come to the knowledge of the truth. They will pray for the salvation of all, and plead this warrant so to do, viz. It is the will of God and our Savior, who gave himself a ransom for all, to be testified in due time.

Further, the charitable hope and desire of good people, such as the gospel requires, is certainly agreeable to the word of God. Now suppose all the race of mankind that ever have lived in the world, or ever shall be in it, were to pass before any godly man, individually in succession. Ask that good man, as he views them passing before his eyes one after another, with regard to each in particular, "Do you hope and desire that in the infinite mercy of God through Christ, *that man* may be saved?" He would say *yes, with all my heart.* So he would say of the first that passed before him, and so of the second, and the same of every one. To answer otherwise, would indicate a spirit not regulated by the word of God, i. e. not according to truth. But thus to express our desire and hope of each individual of the human race, would certainly include the whole. Yet a man destitute of such desires, hopes and prayers, we should not look upon as possessing a gospel spirit, or such a friend to souls as the gospel requires. What should we think of a man that would say, I

deſire moſt of theſe may be in the greateſt miſery to all eternity?

The prayers of good men for their moſt malicious enemies, for the vileſt creatures in the world; ſuch as the prayers of David, and that of Stephen when he was dying, under a ſhower of malice from his enemies and the enemies of God; theſe prayers, I ſay, were not without faith, and a good foundation of faith; and of conſequence, were heard and anſwered of God. Yet, if any are to be eternally damned in their own perſons, we ſhould imagine that ſuch malicious perſecutors, and murderers would certainly be found among them. We ſhould think that the murderers of Chriſt, at leaſt ſome of the many thouſands combined in that moſt malicious of all ſins, would be objects of God's eternal wrath; but it is as certain they were all forgiven, as it is that the prayers of Chriſt were always anſwered, and all his petitions granted at all times. "*And I knew that thou heareſt me always:* John xi. 42.

If it were poſſible for people to diveſt themſelves of the long, deep, and rooted prejudices ariſing from the *limitarian* ſcheme, every man would moſt clearly ſee that we have no foundation or warrant, in reaſon or ſcripture, to pray as good people ever have done, or as Chriſt did for the vileſt of men, for their pardon and eternal ſalvation, but a warrant of this nature, viz. It is the will of God and our Savior, it is his will, without any equivocation or colluſion, that all men

ſhall be ſaved, and, in his own way and time, come to the knowledge of the truth; and that conſiſtent with his truth, holineſs and greateſt honor, by a proper atonement; as Chriſt gave himſelf a ranſom for all to be teſtified in due times, or fit ſeaſons. 1. Tim. ii.

If we were to ſingle out any one of the multitude combined in the murder of Jeſus, as being the worſt of all, perhaps we ſhould pitch upon Judas to be the man. And he indeed met with an awful and aggravated damnation, in the higheſt ſenſe of the term, in the true ſcripture meaning of it, as it relates to any mere man perſonally. What this his damnation or perdition was, I have before ſhewn. But it is juſt as certain that he was forgiven of God, in his own time, and all the reſt of the horrible, blind, malicious multitude, as that Jeſus cried to his Father with his dying breath, "*Father forgive them; for they know not what they do.*"

Christ never made but one conditional prayer, and that he made for this ſpecial reaſon, to leave an everlaſting teſtimony to the world, that ſin, whether actual or imputed, could never be diſcharged without a full ſatisfaction to the divine law. That prayer related to his own ſufferings, and was introduced with an hypotheſis, and cloſed with full ſubmiſſion to the will of God. See Mat. xxvi. and other parallel records in the evangeliſts. All the reſt of his prayers were peremptory, without any condition. On the ground of his atonement, all having the

force of a juſt and abſolute demand. "*Father I will,*" is the tenor of all the prayers that ever Chriſt made for guilty men.

It is proper for us further to conſider, that God will accompliſh the higheſt glory of his own attributes; and that it is certain, they are all more glorified in the ſalvation, than in the perſonal damnation of any ſinner, or every ſinner on earth.

In the ſalvation of ſuch vile, guilty creatures as we are, every divine attribute doth ſhine moſt glorioufly, and all in perfect harmony. No attributes are more glorious than the infinite pity and mercy of God to ſinners, with his power and good will to ſave them freely. This moſt bleſſed part of the divine character is not ſeen, it makes no diſcovery of itſelf with regard to many millions, on the *limitarian* ſcheme. Neither can the holineſs and juſtice of God, ever ſhine ſo glorioufly bright in the perſonal damnation of any ſinner, or of all the poor ſinners in the world, as in the great atonement, exacting full ſatisfaction of a perſonage infinitely greater and dearer to God than any mere man, or all the mere human race. If you leave room, in the glorious plan of our redemption, for all to be perſonally damned, you take away all the glory of it: And you derogate from this glory, in juſt proportion, as you hold, that any number ſhall be perſonally damned, be that number more or leſs.

That doctrine which repreſents all ſin, all moral evil, in the moſt odious and abominable aſpect, has thence, one evidence of being a true doctrine.

There is no other underſtanding of the word, nature, and character of God, that makes oppoſition to him and rebellion againſt him, appear ſo full of miſchief, and ingratitude, as this I am pleading for. To oppoſe ſuch a God, as I conſider Jehovah to be, on this plan of creating, governing and redeeming the world; how abominable! All the glorious attributes of God would be effectually obſtructed, in their diſplays and operations; and the whole creation, that wonderful child of divine love, would ſuffer the moſt barbarous murder, if ſinners might have their perverſe wills gratified, in all their neceſſary conſequences. The infinite, eternal fountain of love, being and bleſſedneſs, would be wholly dried up; and rebellion againſt ſuch a character, would leave nothing but conſummate woe and miſery in the univerſe. To rebel againſt infinite power and knowledge, if united with a diſpoſition oppoſite to that of infinite love, (could ſuch a being exiſt) would not be like rebelling againſt our infinitely kind and merciful, heavenly Father. To rebel againſt the crueleſt tyrant that ever was cloathed with deſpotic power, might be a perilous thing; but not like rebelling againſt the kindeſt, moſt compaſſionate and loving ruler that a happy people was ever bleſſed with.

WILL not every man on earth agree with me in this one point, at leaſt, that no other doctrine ever advanced, can make ſin againſt God, hatred of God and oppoſition to him, look and feel ſo horribly as the doctrine I maintain? For ſurely the nature and native tendency of ſin is wholly to overthrow a God, ſo infinitely glorious and amiable as JEHOVAH, in this view appears, and to ſtifle in the birth all his emanations of being and felicity. This is the nature of all ſin, and not the leſs odious and abominable, becauſe God counteracts the whole by his almighty power and love; but the odiouſneſs of ſin is rather enhanced and aggravated for this very reaſon. The real nature and diſpoſition of our God is, to emanate being and bleſſedneſs far and wide, and that forevermore. The nature of ſin is to obſtruct all this, and therefore no words can expreſs the odiouſneſs of it. For ſin is to be infinitely hated only for its nature. Merely as an event, it belongs to the pure and holy plan, and good government of Deity: Who, even in infinite love and goodneſs, ſaw fit not to hinder the exiſtence of it, however infinitely hateful; and will certainly turn it all to good account, (even contrary to its nature) to the greateſt happineſs of his creatures. Thus the whole ſyſtem of being ſhall, in the reſult of all, be the perfection of love and happineſs.

BUT, were the moral diſpoſition of a Supreme Being ſuch as to propagate ſome hap-

pineſs and abundance of miſery, and that eternal, though, in regard to his abſolute property in all things (which I have often mentioned) we might not accuſe him of injuſtice; yet moſt of his creatures could do no other than lament their fate in bitter howlings and deepeſt agonies of ſoul, becauſe being and miſery had been forced upon them. Our glory and bleſſedneſs lies in this, that JEHOVAH is what he is. "I AM THAT I AM." To be diſaffected to ſuch a God, oh, how criminal!

MOREOVER, that ſalvation is enſured to ſinners, by the death of Chriſt, without the leaſt dependence on any qualifications in them; but, on the contrary, that all the qualifications neceſſary to their enjoyment of the benefit are inſured by his death, is manifeſt expreſsly from Heb. ix. as well as from the whole tenor of the goſpel. A teſtator inſures the legacy, at his death, without any regard at all to the preſent diſpoſition, or even the knowledge of any one of the legatees. He has made the teſtament, and, when he dies, it becomes unalterable, and the heirs take the benefit, whenever it comes to their knowledge. This is the idea of the apoſtle to the Hebrews, on this point. To the ſame purpoſe he writes Titus iii. 4, 5, 6. "After that the love and kindneſs of God towards man appeared, not by works of righteouſneſs, which we have done; but according to his mercy he ſaved us, by the waſhing of regeneration and the renewing of the Holy

Ghoſt; which he ſhed on us abundantly through Jeſus Chriſt our Savior." So it every where appears from the holy ſcriptures, that the atonement, in all caſes, inſures qualifications, or the application of the whole benefit; and *not that our qualifications inſure an atonement*, in our behalf; that the undertaking and purchaſe of Chriſt is at the bottom of all, leads in the whole of the ſalvation of ſinners, makes all ſure; and that the whole application and all qualifications are but conſequences, through the kingly and prophetic offices of Chriſt, co-extenſive with his prieſtly impetration.

No man on earth can ever obtain aſſurance of his ſafe eſtate, or any good hope towards God, on any other foundation than the real and univerſal grace of God. For, while believing, penitent ſinners are laboring to build any hope at all, on good diſtinctions, and good qualifications in themſelves, they can find nothing but what points them out for eternal deſtruction. And they will ſink deeper and deeper in deſpair, in this way, as they look deeper and deeper into their hearts and lives for any ground of hope. God, and he alone is "the hope of Iſrael and Savior thereof, in the day of trouble." "Other foundation can no man lay than that which is laid, which is Jeſus Chriſt." In ſuch a God and ſuch a Savior, the vileſt ſinner on earth may find comfort and ſalvation. "Look unto me and be ye ſaved all the ends of the earth; for I am God and not man, the Holy One in the midſt of thee."

We may add, that this underſtanding of divine revelation, not only leaves the holy bible free from all contradictions and inconſiſtencies; but alſo takes away the main ground of all *deiſtical* ſcruples and doubts.

Many are inclined to deiſm, under the light of divine revelation, becauſe they ſee ſuch an infinite variety of opinions among revelationiſts, innumerable different ſects among thoſe, who in common, hold the ſacred bible for their rule of faith. They are all alike concerned in the great things contained therein, and alike ſincere and honeſt in what they profeſs to believe; yet, there is ſuch variety of opinion, and ſuch oppoſition of ſentiment, in many points, many are thence inclined to doubt whether the doctrine of ſuch a ſpecial revelation is not wholly groundleſs; and ſo fall away into infidelity.

On my plea, all this inducement to deiſm is removed. We conſider the all-wiſe and ſovereign God, as enlightening mankind in various meaſures and degrees, in his own time, way and manner. All are right in ſome degree, more or leſs, and none but what have much darkneſs mixed with the beſt light they have. All agree in one, as far as light is given to each reſpectively. They differ not, on the account of their knowledge of the bible, ſo far as they underſtand it; but only for want of more knowledge of it, and a better underſtanding of its true meaning. Thus all ſects in the world, all opinioniſts, however diverſe in

many things, do indeed conſpire and unite in confirming the truth of the ſacred bible.

When I hear all that *papiſts* ſay of religion, though I perceive great ignorance and darkneſs in them; yet I have thence great confirmation that there is indeed a ſpecial revelation from God, and that the ſame is contained in the old and new teſtaments. When I find *mahometans* defending the old teſtament, though they deny the new, I am by them confirmed in the truth of both. Yea, when I hear any *pagans* in the world, talk about their own religion, (for none are without religion) I eaſily ſee ſomething they have derived from the bible, in ſome indirect way or other: Even as we have light from the ſun by way of the moon, and many other media of reflection; all witneſſing alike that there is a ſun. So every ſect of pagans on earth confirm me in my faith. I find they are all taught of God, as the bible teaches, ſo far as they are taught at all. Their many errors are all owing to negative conſiderations. i. e. Where light extends no further, darkneſs will remain on their minds. So far as God has been pleaſed to lead them to the knowledge of truth, they are right; and in all beſide they muſt be wrong. So when I take a view of the great variety of opinions among *proteſtants*, whom I look upon more enlightened than any other people in the world; they all confirm me in the belief that the bible is from God; though they greatly vary in many things, and op-

pose one another in points almost endless to name.

If I am right in my understanding of God's design and method, his merciful and wise plan of operation to save a guilty world by his dear Son; then my faith is justly confirmed by all these things, which, on any other principles, will tend greatly to confound the mind. On any other Scheme of salvation, a very few there be, but what are destined to eternal, unutterable torments. Who alas! are those few that shall escape? *All are damned by each other;* and I think with equal authority. But, blessed be God, the great Judge is THE SAVIOR OF ALL MEN, and hath taken away the sin of the whole world.

I AM edified, and comforted by every serious, honest man, that I hear talk upon his religion, whatever degrees of light God hath been pleased to give him, be they more or less. I am most edified where there is most light; but truly the light is sweet, even in the least degrees of it. I find something from God given to every sect, and party; and that gives me delight. So it is with me, and so it must be with all that receive divine revelation in this light. Which, I think, is one mark that it is the true light, in which we ought to understand it; as it bears the stamp of its divine Author, who "is the true light, which LIGHTETH EVERY MAN that cometh into the world." And oh! what charity, love, and mutual friendship must flow from such a view of God and his

ways! This is that charity which is the bond of perfectneſs.

THERE is no other doctrine of grace, that will ſo encourage the uſe of all the means of grace and ſalvation, and ſo enforce upon our minds the fitneſs and propriety of all the inſtitutions of the goſpel.

I CONSIDER the whole divine plan connected indiſſolubly: All made ſure; not in any diſtinction of means and end; but all in one indiſſoluble chain. So that it is as true and proper to ſay, that none can be ſaved without regeneration, repentance, faith, and holineſs, as to ſay that the extreme link in any chain cannot be drawn forward, by an hand at the oppoſite end of the chain, unleſs every link in the ſame chain is moved. It is always true, and always will be, that he that believeth not ſhall be damned, and is indeed damned perſonally, ſo long as he remain in that ſtate. "He is condemned already;" "the wrath of God abideth on him," and will ſo abide, until he is brought out of that ſtate of infidelity and impenitence.

THE greater our hope is in the uſe of means to obtain any important end, the greater will be our exertions in every caſe, without exception. Full aſſurance of ſucceſs will excite the greateſt exertions of all, provided we know that ſure ſucceſs is only in this way. So, when Paul told the ſailors, from the mouth of an angel, that not one of their lives ſhould be loſt by the ſhipwreck,

Acts xxvii. they exerted themſelves much the more vigorouſly to obey his directions afterwards, in uſing the means, as he told them it was the only way in which they could be ſaved. Every careful obſerver of human nature, and of the force of motives, well knows it is ſo in every caſe. If the end is very important in our view, and there is but juſt one way to attain it ; yet, if ſucceſs in that way is altogether dubious, and moſt likely our labors and efforts will be all in vain, we might probably exert ourſelves in ſome degree, though with a faint heart. But, let us know aſſuredly we ſhall attain our important end, if we will exert ourſelves with all our might, and that this is the only way ; this will animate all the powers we have, and we ſhall engage to purpoſe. The caſe is juſt the ſame in this matter of infinite weight, as in other caſes of a temporal concern ; excepting only that our exertions are excited with much greater force.

Moreover, the infinite reaſonableneſs of religion and the ſervice of God; the unſpeakable pleaſure of it, and the ſuperior reward in heaven, *in proportion* to our ſignal obedience and piety in this ſtate of probation; the great and good influence of religion and virtue, as relative to the ſpiritual, and even temporal good of our fellow-men, and many other conſiderations, too many now to ſpecify, all recommend the careful uſe of the means of grace and ſalvation, and a life of piety and virtue in this world. In this

of piety and virtue in this world. In this way of saving sinners, God manifests his infinite wisdom and goodness in laying out for rational creatures and moral agents, work adapted to their rational, moral natures, and full of comfort, pleasure, and joy. Salvation, however, was not appointed for the means of it; but the means, for eternal salvation, which was eternally made sure, in the covenant of redemption, to that race of beings whose sin the Lamb of God came to take away.

It has ever been the sense of the most enlightened part of christians, that the doctrine of election, and of the certain perseverance of believers, were doctrines tending to engage them the more in the use of means. The doctrine of election, as I have defined it, hath a greater influence of the same kind, as it displays a more extensive love of God to men, and gives us more enlarged views of free grace, and makes poor sinners more dependent on God in every view.

If this doctrine does indeed take hold of our souls, oh! what a sacrifice of love shall we offer to God, even our whole souls and bodies! How shall we love God and all his creatures for his sake! How shall we love our dear Savior, and all for whom he died, for his sake, whether to us friends or enemies, known or unknown, Jews or gentiles, barbarians, Scythians, bond or free! Jesus hath died for them all; he loves them all; and he will bring them all into his kingdom. He will reconcile the world to himself,

not imputing iniquity. The ends of the earth ſhall look unto him and be ſaved.

It is another token of true goſpel faith, and truly evangelical principles, that, in the exerciſe of them, good people find themſelves happy in their own lot, and are not uneaſy or envious towards others.

Whoever has that ſenſe of the word of God, which I maintain, will enjoy this happineſs. They are quite willing that all mankind ſhould enjoy every favor and bleſſing God is pleaſed to beſtow. They delight in the gracious communications of God, every where. If the friends of God have many bleſſings, they delight therein; and if they that at preſent know not God, abound in outward good things, they delight in God's mercy thus far towards them. They would by no means exchange their own enjoyments, whatever their circumſtances may be in worldly things, for all the enjoyments of thoſe in a ſtate of darkneſs, and ignorance of the great ſalvation. They well know that their real happineſs is as much greater than that of the unrenewed, as are the manifeſtations of divine light and love to their ſouls. They feel themſelves happy in the knowledge of God and Jeſus Chriſt. This is life and heaven to their ſouls. Their acquaintance with God is perfect peace. Their ſenſe of the ſure, final mercy of God to all men, whom indeed they ardently love, does much add to their conſolation. One that loves and pities all ſinners, as the goſ-

pel requires, and as all that have a gospel spirit do, *cannot* feel so happy in a persuasion that most of them will be eternally damned, as they do, who believe that "God will have all men to be saved."

They who have that sense of God and salvation which I plead for, are exceeding happy at all times, in such a God and such a salvation. Indeed their souls desire no more. "Whom have I in heaven but thee? and there is none upon earth that I desire besides thee." Such well know that godliness carries its own comfort along with it, even in the present world, having promise of the life that now is, as well as that which is to come. I am very confident in affirming, that they who know God and his salvation, in the light I have represented, will be filled with exceeding joy, and will envy no person on earth; but will rejoice in all the good that any enjoy. If this be the effect of these doctrines wrought in the heart, they are doubtless according to godliness.

I am very sensible no man will, or ever can fully and cordially believe in such a character of God, and such a salvation, without the special energy of divine power and grace, which is fitly called regeneration. Others may have a doctrinal belief of these things, in some sense; but to feel the reality of these glorious truths in the soul, requires a supernatural work on hearts so disaffected to God as ours are in a natural state. We judge of God's feelings towards us, by our

towards him, as all natural men do. Therefore, none but new creatures, can believe ſuch glorious, aſtoniſhing truths as theſe, with all their hearts, without heſitation, and with joy and peace in believing. No man can be fully ſatisfied with this doctrine. until God has created in his ſoul a friendſhip towards himſelf. When he knows by experience that he loves God, he will believe that God can love ſinners freely. They that truly know God, have a very different ſenſe of the love of God, from that of a blind world, whoſe eyes are faſt cloſed in infidelity.

These thoughts, moreover, lead us to ſee the great duty, and propriety of ſupporting, and maintaining goſpel ordinances and inſtitutions in the world, and giving all due encouragement to the beſt inſtructors in the way of ſalvation, that we can obtain, whether God hath been pleaſed to enlighten them more or leſs. The bleſſing of ſuch inſtruction and ordinances is great in every view, temporal and ſpiritual. This is God's wiſe and merciful way to make us know the things freely given us of God, and to give us great preſent comfort in theſe things, and glorious hopes of eternal, conſummate happineſs in the life to come. No other plan of religion can ever ſo much animate a people, to attend the worſhip and ordinances of God, to hallow his ſabbaths, and reverence his ſanctuary, and to love their ſpiritual guides moſt cordially, and account them worthy of double honor, for their works ſake, eſpecially thoſe who labor in word and

doctrine. In a word, these principles, if they really take hold of the heart, will have every happy effect that the gospel requires of us.

AGAIN; It is an evidence of true, gospel doctrine, if, when cordially believed, it will make us willing and joyful that God should be at the head of the universe, *almighty, absolute Sovereign in all things, God over all, blessed forevermore;* also if it make creatures willing to keep *their own* proper place, at the feet of JEHOVAH, and rejoice to be absolutely dependent on such a God, and at his absolute, sovereign disposal forever and ever.

THIS idea of God, and this understanding of his word, will have such a blessed effect on every believing soul. We shall see clearly, that JEHOVAH is *by nature* God, and worthy to be God over all; and we shall exceedingly rejoice that we, and all creatures are in his hands, as the clay in the hands of the potter. We can trust him with as much joy, as safety. And we see, that all the world may well rejoice in his absolute, sovereign rule. Then we shall break out in raptures of holy joy, "The Lord reigneth, let the earth rejoice, let the multitude of the isles be glad thereof." Then we shall cry out with unfeigned lips, "Praise the Lord all his works, in all places of his dominion: Bless the Lord, O my soul." When God hath given souls this understanding to know the truth, they will ex-

ceedingly rejoice that God is what he is, and that they are his creatures, in the proper relation of creatures; that is, in a ſtate of intire, abſolute, and everlaſting dependence on ſuch a being as JEHOVAH.

THE *limitarian* ſcheme never can have this operation on our ſouls. God himſelf has fixed his own laws, in our ſouls, that abſolutely forbid it. *The law of nature is as really and truly the law of God, as the written word.* Thoſe natural and inevitable feelings, which are common to all rational creatures, whether holy or ſinful, whether angels or men, or of whatever rank or deſcription, are indeed the laws of God. The whole law of nature is the law of JEHOVAH, the Author of nature; and a pure law too. By this law of God, he has made it forever abſolutely impoſſible that any creature ſhould cordially, without any averſion of ſoul, freely conſent to be forever and ever in the moſt inexpreſſible pain and torment. God's law of nature cries out againſt it, with all the authority of the divine Being himſelf. Much leſs can any holy ſoul be willing to be an eternal ſinner, an everlaſting enemy to God, which is the grand, eſſential thing in that hell the *limitarians* plead for.

GOD does not ſet his own laws in oppoſition to one another. He does not, by one law, call upon us to avoid pain and miſery as much as we can, and by another bid us be pleaſed with it. Much leſs does he, by one law, command us to be holy and love

him ſupremely, and ſerve him in all holy and perfect obedience, and, by another law, command us to be quite willing to hate and rebel againſt him to all eternity. For us to obey two laws directly oppoſite, is as impoſſible as to ſerve two oppoſite maſters. But on the plan which I ſupport, we may, if our hearts are right, keep all the laws of God in glorious harmony, and find that, in keeping them there is great reward.

THE *limitarians* do indeed tell us, that all, under their eternal decree of reprobation, ought finally to be willing to be damned. Many of them ſay, that every man muſt be brought to this willingneſs, before he can be ſaved!! God grant them further light, that they may better underſtand his nature, character, and wiſe, harmonious laws.

ON the preſent plan, I can will all that God wills, and do all that God bids me, if my heart is right, and that with great alacrity and joy. I am willing to keep *my own place*, as a creature of God, and I rejoice that my God will forever keep HIS, that JEHOVAH will ſit on the throne of abſolute, univerſal government to all eternity. I rejoice that he doeth his pleaſure in the armies of heaven and among the inhabitants of the world, that none can ſtay his hand, neither may any ſay unto him what doeſt thou? I want no ſecurity but what I have in the nature and character of God, as diſplayed in his works and word, through his

own Son, the brightneſs of his glory, and the expreſs image of his perſon.

I THINK thoſe principles cannot be wrong that have this native effect on the ſoul; nor thoſe right, which require of us oppoſite things and abſolute impoſſibilities.

I HAVE before obſerved, that perſonal damnation in hell, is not once aſſerted in the bible, of any particular perſon; nor a word of that nature ſaid, but what, agreeable to the whole genius and tenor of divine revelation, points to a ſubſtitute. I add, in this place, that no ſuch thing is ſaid even of Judas himſelf; though, as the engliſh words ſtand, in our tranſlation, there is more that ſeems to favor ſuch a tenet, than in any other paſſage of ſacred writ.

IN our engliſh bible we have the words thus, "It had been good for that man if he had not been born." Mat. xxvi. 24. and, in Mark xiv. 21. "Good were it for that man if he had never been born." Now if this tranſlation were ever ſo exact and literal, it would by no means overthrow the general tenor of reaſoning from the nature and word of God, which we have been led into. It might, without any unreaſonable ſtraining of words, be underſtood, only as one of the many awful denunciations we have of the voice of juſtice, all ſilenced and ſatisfied in the great ſurety. I appeal, however, to every learned reader, that the tranſlation of theſe words is not juſt, nor grammatical. The following words are ex-

actly literal and grammatical. "*Good were it for him, if he had not been born that man,*" or such a man.* Much better indeed, had it been for Judas if he had not been born such a prodigy of wickedness. So much the divine spirit says. But by no means, says that Judas, or any other man, shall be a loser by existence, on the whole. This I notice by the way *as just*, though not essential to the grand argument.

It is also evident that we have a right understanding of the character of God and his word, if we are thence affected with holy fear and trembling, mixed with holy joy and engagedness of heart to serve God.

This sense of God and salvation, now maintained, hath certainly such an effect on the soul. To think of such a God, whose absolute property we are: To consider what sinners we indeed are, and how justly deserving of his awful wrath and vengeance to all eternity: And that we can do nothing to help ourselves, and no creature can help us: That all our hope originates from the nature and sovereign purpose, and decree of God, utterly contrary to all our deserts: To think what we must be to all eternity, if justice should only take place upon us, (and let God do what he will with us, we can never

* καλὸν ἦν αὐτῳ, εἰ οὐκ ἐγεννηθη ὁ ἀνθρωπος ἐκεινος.

open our mouths with any charge of injuſtice on the abſolute Proprietor of all things) this will fill our whole ſouls with fear and trembling. Alſo, to find the nature and diſpoſition of the great and terrible God ſo diſplayed in his word, as to ſee that *this*, and *this* alone, is our full and everlaſting ſecurity: That our everlaſting ſafety lies in the nature of the great God, and no where elſe: This I ſay, will fill us with exceeding joy, and engage us earneſtly in all the means of ſalvation, which ſuch a great and glorious God hath appointed. Knowing that this awful and endearing JEHOVAH ſaves, *only in his own way;* how thankful ſhall we be that he has told us the way, and marked out the path! Moſt certainly, this will make us work out our own ſalvation with fear and trembling. We ſhall indeed ſerve the Lord with fear, and rejoice with trembling.

No view we can have of the way of ſalvation, but this, will affect us with that undiſſembled, unfeigned humility, which the goſpel requires. But this will make us eſteem others better than ourſelves, and that without any compliment at all; not only ſome others, but, in the natural ſenſe of the phraſe, others in the general view.

EVERY man that feels the truth and force of this doctrine, will really feel and know that he is worſe than other men, yea, than any other man that ever had exiſtence; becauſe he knows ſo much more of himſelf

than of any other man ; alſo, becauſe the belief of this doctrine is attended with real, goſpel charity towards all men, even that charity which hopeth all things. Such a ſenſe of God and ſalvation, and ſuch a view of himſelf, will make any man cry out, in the utmoſt ſincerity, and without ſo much as the ſhadow of a compliment, ſurely I am more brutiſh than any man : I have not the underſtanding of a man : I neither learned wiſdom, nor have the knowledge of the holy : I abhor myſelf and repent in duſt and aſhes.

SUCH indeed is the very nature of all mankind, that, while they build their confidence of God's eternal favor, on good marks, and good diſtinctions in themſelves ; and thence conclude they ſhall be ſaved and moſt others damned, it will feed their pride, and puff their ſouls up with haughtineſs. They may ſay what they pleaſe, of "*mere grace*," "*mere favor*," "*free grace*," "*free favor* :" Not the leſs proud will they be for all this ; but quite the reverſe.

NOTHING in the univerſe hath a more powerful operation on human ſouls, to make them proud, than that great, exalted, renowned perſonages have ſingled them out as ſpecial favorites. A full confidence that the infinitely exalted JEHOVAH hath done it, will make every man, while in this world, feel juſt as the phariſee did, when moved by the ſame inward ſentiment. Merely a ſenſe of the greateſt favors will make no man proud ; but bring in the idea of compariſon and diſtinction,

and it will make every man ſo, while under the moral infirmities of nature which attend us in the preſent world. But on my plea, every valley is filled, and every mountain and hill is brought low, and the crooked is made ſtrait, and the rough places plain, and the Lord alone is exalted. This will bring down every high thought and imagination, that exalteth itſelf againſt the knowledge of Chriſt, and bring all into ſubjection to the obedience of faith.

It is very natural for many to make inferences, and draw conſequences from what is ſaid concerning the ſalvation of mankind, and apply the ſame to other ranks and orders of beings, which we know little, or nothing about.

Thus, they apply theſe doctrines to the caſe of the miſerable, fallen angels. I think we proceed upon very uncertain ground, in all ſuch reaſonings and applications. God has been pleaſed to acquaint us a little, and but a very little, with any other intelligent creatures, whether holy or unholy, but thoſe of our own rank and order, our fellow men. Yet, as it does, in certain reſpects, concern our duty and practice in this world, to know ſomething of holy angels, and alſo of evil angels, we are made ſo far acquainted with their reſpective diſpoſitions and circumſtances as relates to our practice, and no farther.

We are taught, that many of the angels have been very ſinful and very miſerable a

great while, and that they are very aſſiduous, crafty, and malicious to oppoſe the happineſs of the human race, and promote all the ſin and miſery they can. We are told that the holy angels are of a direct contrary diſpoſition and character. And we are taught, in the word of God, how to conduct ourſelves relative to both. This is as much as God hath ſeen fit to reveal to us on this ſubject. I have often thought, that the immodeſty of mankind is as much diſcovered in many poſitive aſſertions about the angels, as in any one thing.

THIS, however, I ſuppoſe we may ſay concerning the miſerable, condemned angels, that they are as great ſinners, as we by nature are, in proportion to the quantity of being they poſſeſs; and greater ſinners than we are by nature, only in conſideration that they are of an higher rank than we, and have a greater meaſure of exiſtence; but leſs ſinners than we in one very capital view. For they have not ſinned againſt a KINSMAN REDEEMER, and the proclamations of ſuch a goſpel as we have deſpiſed.

WE may alſo ſay, that even to this day (for ought we know) they have as much cauſe of eternal deſpair as the human kind once had, during the ſpace between the moment of our original rebellion, and the firſt intimation of a Savior: That they juſtly deſerve endleſs damnation, by the very nature of their criminality, as well as we: And that they will certainly be eternally damned, in the voice of juſtice, and we

know of no declaration of grace that relates to them, any more than the human kind once did, with regard to miſerable, *damned*, or *condemned* ſinners, of our own order.

We may further ſay, that God can certainly do them no wrong, any more than he can us. If their miſery is endleſs, or if ours had been ſo; the will of God is neceſſarily juſt, and the only ſtandard of all juſtice and righteouſneſs, for this grand, all important reaſon, which I would not ſo often repeat, were it not of the utmoſt conſequence that it ſhould ſink deep into our ſouls and never be unthought of, viz. his abſolute, underived, univerſal, and everlaſting property in all things.

If we ſay more than the above, I apprehend, we do no honor thereby to our profeſſion of goſpel humility: Or rather, that we tranſgreſs in exerciſing ourſelves in great matters, or things too high for us, that we know not; and darken counſel by words without knowledge. Who can ſay that the ſame God who found a way for our recovery, can find none for theirs, throughout an interminable eternity? Or who can ſay, that even our own all-ſufficient Savior will not, in ſome way, unknown to us at preſent, be found hereafter the Head of ALL principalities and powers, in a more gracious ſenſe than we have imagined, even in an infinitely merciful ſenſe to the father, the devil, as well as to his children? Who can ſay that a Savior, of ſuch unſearchable riches of grace, ſuch boundleſs wiſdom and

power, will not, in his own way and time, make every knee bow to him, in one and the ſame ſenſe, and every tongue confeſs, from one and the ſame ſpirit, that he is Lord of all to the glory of God the Father? Who can ſay that God will not, in ſome future period of endleſs duration, *gather together in* ONE, ALL *things in Chriſt, both in heaven and on earth and under the earth*, in the moſt plain and ſimple underſtanding of the terms? Who can ſay, that he will never wholly conquer death, though it be the laſt enemy, and ſhall ſurvive every other conqueſt of his; even death, in the moſt common, ſcripture ſenſe of the word, including ſpiritual death, which includes all ſinfulneſs, as well as natural death?

WHO can ſay, that the greateſt ſufferers, and thoſe who are thrown into the greateſt diſtreſs and horror, ſave ONE, ſhall be on the whole loſers by their having been called into being, by the almighty power of God, who is love? Since it is certain that the greateſt of all ſufferers, and he who, in a legal view, was juſtly charged with the greateſt guilt, is the greateſt gainer of all creatures by his exiſtence. I here ſpeak juſt as our moſt enlightened, and moſt orthodox divines have always ſpoken. They all agree in the perfect holineſs and purity of the man Chriſt Jeſus, in a perſonal ſenſe; yet, in a vicarious ſenſe, and as by the covenant of redemption he ſtood related to the divine law, they all agree, he was juſtly charged with the greateſt guilt of any

creature that ever God made, even the ſins of the whole world. As he ſtood related to pain and puniſhment he never had an equal. And this is the great, eſſential, capital doctrine of divine revelation, whereby the bible is moſt of all diſtinguiſhed from all other books. I ſay ſince this greateſt of all ſufferers, on account of ſin, is the greateſt gainer of all the creatures of God by his exiſtence, on the whole, who can ſay God cannot deal in a ſimilar way with all who ſuffer on account of ſin? For whether you are an original debtor, or a ſurety, there is no difference as to your juſt obligation to pay the debt.

Are we not rather immodeſt and arrogant, when we poſitively affirm, that we certainly know, God has called into exiſtence innumerable myriads of intelligent creatures to be extremely miſerable, to endleſs duration, under his own fixed eternal decree? God indeed ſaw it beſt, on the whole, that much evil ſhould take place, both moral and natural; otherwiſe he certainly would have hindered it. But who can ſay that God himſelf, with all his wiſdom, power and love, is not able to anſwer all the wiſe, good, and glorious purpoſes he deſigned, by the exiſtence of all evil, moral and natural; yet ſo as to leave not one of his offspring a loſer by exiſtence?

As to the man Jeſus Chriſt, he had ten thouſand times more guilt to anſwer for, than any other man in the world, and no doubt more than any miſerable, fallen angel.

And he was juſt as much obligated to ſuffer pain, miſery, and puniſhment, as if it had been perſonal; yet that man Chriſt Jeſus is, on the whole, the moſt dignified and happy creature that ever God made. "Being found in faſhion as a man, he humbled himſelf and became obedient to death, even the death of the croſs; wherefore God alſo hath highly exalted him, and given him a name which is above every name: That at the name of Jeſus, every knee ſhould bow, of things in heaven and things in the earth, and things under the earth; and that every tongue ſhould confeſs, that Jeſus Chriſt is Lord, to the glory of God the Father." Phili. ii. 8, &c. "For the joy ſet before him, he endured the croſs, deſpiſing the ſhame, and is ſet down at the right hand of the throne of God."

Do we know enough about the extent of divine wiſdom, power and love, to affirm that moſt, or even any of God's own offſpring ſhall be infinite loſers by exiſtence irreſiſtibly forced upon them, by the infinitely kind Fountain of all being and bleſſedneſs? When we get ſo far beyond our line in reaſoning, we tread on very uncertain ground. Let us then let the fallen angels alone. But if any of us muſt needs enquire more about the eternal fate of the angels that fell; it is well for us to remember that they are our ſuperiors, in the ſcale of creation, and ſtand related to us as the offſpring of the great, common Fountain of

being; and are no worſe than we in their temper and diſpoſition, only as no mediator hath operated on their minds, as upon ours, in a way of reſtraint, or by any kind, or gracious operation, as upon the human kind ever ſince the fall.

CHILDREN are to hate their father the devil, only as they are to hate their natural parents and all their fellow men, and even themſelves. *Not with perſonal hatred; not with feelings of malevolence; not as creatures of God;* but all in them morally evil in its own nature, all that is oppoſite to the moral nature or character of the common Fountain of being. Thus we are to hate father and mother, wife and children, brethren and ſiſters, yea, and our own life alſo; and thus, and in no other way, we ought to hate every thing in which moral evil appears. But if we feel any malevolence towards the devil, as a creature of God, or wiſh him evil; we feel towards him as he does towards us, and ſhew his moral likeneſs in this our malevolence, as might be expected from devils only. If we wiſh the fallen angels may all remain eternally damned, and that the common Parent of all may never diſplay and glorify his great name in their deliverance, from enmity, ſin and pain, even if he is able to do it; if we heartily wiſh they may be the objects of almighty vengeance to endleſs duration, then, *we feel towards them, as they do towards us.*

IF our natural parents are very wicked, and, by neceſſary conſequences, very miſe-

rable, we do well to wiſh, that God, of his infinite power and grace, would make them better and happier. We know he can do it, if he pleaſes. And ſince we know not, but that infinite wiſdom, power, and mercy can, if God pleaſe, take hold of our infernal parents; we ſhew a ſpirit too much like theirs, in wiſhing they may continue to endleſs duration, in all their ſins and in all their torments. It is certain the great JEHOVAH may, in pure juſtice, leave them ſo forever; the very nature of their ſinfulneſs does merit this, by every rule of pure righteouſneſs, without any conſideration in the univerſe ſeparate from the very nature of ſin. And God might have left us in like manner, and in the like pure juſtice. But, for my part, I am quite willing God ſhould make me holy and happy, for the glory of his own name, and all my fellow ſinners without exception, if he pleaſe. I am willing the Lord ſhould be thus "*good unto* ALL," and his tender mercies thus be over all his works, which are capable of holineſs and happineſs.

IF we knew ourſelves better than we do, we ſhould not look upon ourſelves, by nature, ſo unlike to the fallen angels as we are apt to imagine. I think it, however, our wiſdom to enquire no more about any order of beings, than we have ſome *data*, ſome means of knowledge to aſſiſt our enquiries; and no more about the devils than may concern our practice, that we may not bear their image, and may guard againſt their malice and evil influence.

And now, to take up another thought, I apprehend that the way of ſalvation I am defending, has this further mark of truth. *It exhibits God to our view, as conducting the affairs of our ſalvation analogous to all his other conduct.*

The all-wiſe and good God does influence, move, and govern all his creatures, in a way ſuitable to the natures and faculties he hath given them. This is to be ſeen every where, and in every thing. With regard to all our temporal enjoyments, though they are the objects of his eternal decree, made eternally ſure in his all-glorious, immutable plan; yet he gives us all theſe things, in a way ſuitable to our natures, as rational creatures and free moral agents, by the exerciſe of our minds and bodies, that we may have, at all times, proper exerciſe; for this is wholly neceſſary to our felicity. This is all the reaſon why God does not give us all our food immediately fit for eating, and all our raiment ready to put on: If he did ſo, we ſhould be without that exertion and employment ſuited to our natures as active creatures, and neceſſary to our comfort. Therefore, though our exertions are required, it is not to make theſe enjoyments more ſure to us, than he could have otherwiſe made them, or than even his eternal decree made them. It is juſt ſo with regard to our ſalvation. The means are all laid out for us, and enjoined upon us, and connected with the end, juſt as much as in all temporal things, only becauſe this gives proper exer-

cife to the immortal ſoul, attended with unſpeakable pleaſure and delight; and is ſuited to our rational natures, and the relation we ſtand in to God. Our working out our own ſalvation, is only a reaſonable duty, not preceding the certainty of it, in God's view; but following as a fit and happy *conſequence*, in his eternal plan, and in the order of his communication of bleſſedneſs made ſure before the foundation of the world.

So there is every reaſon, and all manner of fitneſs, that we ſhould inculcate upon all mankind, the uſe of the means of grace and ſalvation, that can poſſibly be in any caſe in the univerſe. It is our reaſonable, fit, and happy ſervice, and not only with regard to all the powers of our ſouls, but of the whole man, even our bodies alſo. Hence did Paul ſay, "I beſeech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye preſent your bodies a living ſacrifice, holy, acceptable to God, which is your reaſonable ſervice." Rom. xii.

It is proper to ſay, in every caſe in the univerſe, and in every caſe alike true, that the actions and exertions of creatures never alter the previous and eternal certainty of any thing; neither did God deſign them for any ſuch end, or with any ſuch view. God has ordered and commanded all the duties that are to be done by all his creatures, to carry into effect, and to accompliſh his own fixed, good and merciful decrees, in the only fit way, that is, in a way ſuited to

the natures he has given them, and in certain connection with the end. All these are in the immutable universal system, as much as the end. Hence we see the great propriety of God's encouragements and promises to the virtuous and obedient; and of his threatnings to the vicious and rebellious. They are all suited to the nature of man. And hence we see how fit it is, that obedience and virtue should be attended with delight and joy, as it always is; and that all sin should be attended, or rebuked with pain and sorrow, which never fails to be the case.

They, whom God has set up in this world to rule and govern mankind, should, under him, enact good and wholesome laws, in favor of all virtue, and good conduct; and in terrible opposition to all wickedness, all that opposeth the nature of God, and the good and happiness of the creatures of God. This is exceeding fit and proper among men, wisely adapted to their natures. The Most High, no doubt, could suppress vice and iniquity in some other way; but none appears to us so well adapted to the natures of men. Hence there is every reason for rulers and ruled, to unite in the most vigorous efforts for the best possible civil government.

This view of the way of God, and this understanding of his revealed will, is supported, in that it opens to our sight another grand doctrine of revelation. Which is, *the amazing unreasonableness of sin, and sin-*

ners ; and how they will pervert all truth and reaſon, to the vileſt purpoſes.

MANY will ſay, if all theſe things are ſo, if all things, all events, are eternally made certain ; men and devils are not to blame for their ſins : Juſt as though the blame of ſin did not lie in the nature of it. Many will ſay, if ſalvation is finally ſecured, as here repreſented, then it is very eligible for men to indulge all their luſts in this world, and live in all manner of vice, as they pleaſe : Juſt as though vice and wickedneſs were attended with happineſs : Not conſidering, that perfection of wickedneſs, with its inſeparable connections, does in very deed, make the whole hell that the *limitarians* plead for ; or that rectitude and virtue in its perfection, does, in very deed, make the heavenly happineſs we hope for. They are ſo blind and unreaſonable, as not to ſee that if ſinfulneſs, or hell, which are for ſubſtance the ſame thing, are not hateful and horrible in this world, they cannot be hereafter; and that if virtue, holineſs, or heaven, which are eſſentially the ſame thing, are not deſirable in this world, they cannot be in the world to come.

THIS plan, moreover, helps us to the beſt poſſible ſolution of the queſtion, which ſo often ariſes among men. *Why did God ever bring moral evil into his eternal plan, or ſuffer it to exiſt?* For, upon this plan, we ſee that God doth ſo diſplay and exerciſe his own perfections, in oppoſing the nature of ſin

and *its effects*, as we cannot see he otherwise might have done. And we also find many exercises of mind; many employments and efforts laid out for his rational creatures, in opposing sin and its awful attendants and consequences, in obedience to God; and much exercise of humility, and thankfulness, and all graces which we can see no room for, had God's eternal plan been otherwise.

This doctrine is further supported, by the doctrine of God's unlimited wisdom and power.

All will allow, that if all the good ends could have been answered and accomplished, without the eternal misery of a multitude of mankind, then it had been better, and then God would have chosen it; because all grant, that such misery is, in its nature, a great evil, and very undesirable, yea very horrible. To suppose that God could not have answered all these glorious ends, without this eternal misery of so many creatures, is to suppose that he was limited by the very nature of things; or that it could not, in the nature of things have been otherwise. But, pray, what is the nature of things? And whence does the nature of things originate? Certainly from God and his attributes only. For in that period of duration when there was nothing existent but God. where was the nature of things, or the necessity of nature, but in God only?

To suppose there was any limitation upon the eternal Being, when no other being

did exiſt, is to ſuppoſe that his own infinite, unlimited attributes did limit, and ſet bounds to his conduct, or to the emanations of his infinite love and benevolence. It is to ſay, that God would have done better if he could; but that he could not: He acted out himſelf with as much kindneſs as he could, and wiſhed to have been more kind, had it been poſſible, in the nature of things; that is, in the nature of his own perfections, which give nature to all things elſe: That his infinite wiſdom, power and love, could do no better than to exhibit a ſyſtem glorious in the main; but at the expence of the unutterable, endleſs miſery of countleſs myriads of his own offspring. This lays a limitation on the Moſt High, ariſing from his own attributes; becauſe thence flows the whole nature of things, as their nature cannot flow from non-entity.

But, a juſt idea of the great God is this, he can indeed do all that the infinite goodneſs of his heart is diſpoſed to do; and he never gave a nature to things to obſtruct the emanations of his love. "*What his ſoul deſireth even that he doeth.*"

The *limitarians* ſuppoſe God hath formed a ſyſtem as full of happineſs as was poſſible, and a glorious ſyſtem on the whole. That he would have kept out of this ſyſtem the eternal miſery of any creature, if he had been able; but was not able, through the neceſſity of his own attributes, ſo to do; therefore formed the beſt ſyſtem he could.

A ſyſtem much better than none, and even good on the whole, in a high degree. How does this correſpond with juſt conceptions of JEHOVAH, God Almighty, all-wiſe, and infinite love?

IT is in vain to ſay here, that this argument would equally exclude out of the ſyſtem, all the moral and penal evil that ever did exiſt, or ever will. Becauſe, on the *goſpel plan*, according to my ſenſe of it, all the evil of every kind that hath exiſted, or ſhall exiſt, is real good in the whole connection; not only to the *ſyſtem in general*, but to *every individual* in it, capable of rational happineſs. No one ſhall be leſs happy, on the whole, than if no evil had ever taken place. Moral and natural evil never did, or ſhall exiſt, at the expence (if I may ſo ſpeak) of any one of the creatures of love, or of God who is love. Eternity is long enough, to make every creature as happy on the whole, as if there had never been any experience of evil of any kind; at leaſt, we can by no means prove the contrary. That ſentiment of the poet has ever been admired—

> "The bleſt to day, is as compleatly ſo,
> As who began a thouſand years ago."

CREATURES may ſuffer evil a great while, yet have as long duration before them to be happy in, as if they had never taſted of evil. To ſay that any duration of evil, or any degree of it, certainly, makes ſome deduction, and a proportionable deduction from our quantity of happineſs, though it may after-

wards commence and be endleſs thenceforth, is to ſay more than any creature can know; unleſs we can find a creature who comprehends eternity and all things belonging to it. It is alſo ſaying, what ſtands in full oppoſition to the common ſenſe, and faith of the proteſtant world, in ſeveral other caſes. Take only the following well known inſtance inſtead of many.

We all believe that the ſaint that laſt goes to heaven, ſhall have as great a reward of free grace, as the ſaint that firſt went thither; provided their moral characters are equal in this life. Of this we doubt not, and the ſcripture is full to the purpoſe. We alſo agree in the opinion of the eternal, progreſſive happineſs of the ſaints in heaven, and that they who went there ſeveral thouſand years ago, are far advanced in glory and bleſſedneſs beyond thoſe who go there at this day; and further ſtill before thoſe, who may go to heaven thouſands of years hence. All this we believe, alſo, that all equal characters ſhall have an equal reward of glory in heaven, whether they live and die ſooner or later. "I will give unto this laſt even as unto thee:" "The firſt ſhall be laſt and the laſt ſhall be firſt:" i. e. all equal on the whole, if their moral characters and ſervices have been ſo in this world. Theſe are points not controverted among proteſtants. Yet it is eaſy to ſee, that the ſame objection, if any, lies againſt this doctrine, as againſt what I have aſſerted, viz. that experience of evil, for a given time, may be

conſiſtent with the ſame quantity of happineſs in endleſs duration, as if the evil had never been ſuffered.*

I WOULD, indeed, never be poſitive, when I reaſon about infinity and eternity, which are incomprehenſible to all beings, but God himſelf. And I only mention this inſtance,

* Suppoſe a rational creature to exiſt any given period of time, more or leſs, in great miſery, and then, at the end of that certain period, to exiſt juſt as much longer in as great pleaſure and happineſs, ſo as exactly to counterbalance all his former pain and make him even on the whole, neither a gainer or loſer by his exiſtence thus far. Then ſuppoſe it to be the good will of his Maker, to continue him in being to endleſs duration, in a ſtate of progreſſive happineſs. Suppoſe alſo, that it is the pleaſure of the Moſt High to create another, of equal capacity, at the moment when the former has arrived at the end of the ſecond period aforementioned, viz. at that moment when he is juſt as well off, and no better than if he had never been created. Let theſe two beings exiſt thenceforward to endleſs duration, in equal degrees of progreſſive happineſs, and it is eaſy to ſee that both, on the whole, ſhall be juſt alike happy, i. e. the former will be, at the moment of his counterbalance, in the ſelf ſame predicament, in this reſpect, as if he had been created that very moment. So that it is evident enough, that if our uncontroverted opinion, that all equal characters in this world ſhall have equal happineſs in the eternal world, whether they are born ſooner or later, be true; then it is true, that a rational creature may ſuffer great pains, for any given period of time, and yet be ſo far from being a loſer by exiſtence, that he may be juſt as great a gainer thereby, on the whole, as any other creature of equal capacity who never taſted of any evil at all, and who hath his beginning of exiſtence in a later period of duration. I beg none would imagine from this remark, that I think the great JEHOVAH bound in juſtice to repay any of his creatures for their pains, by an equal balance of happineſs. I have no idea of any ſuch demand of the clay on the great Potter, or of any creature on his Maker. The will of JEHOVAH is neceſſarily juſt, and the only criterion, rule and ſtandard of all righteouſneſs. Let men or angels be in whatever predicament they may, it is the will of God that hath placed them there, and they may not impeach their Maker of injuſtice, or by any means make on him a claim of reward. I only take refuge in the infinite ſovereignty of the divine will, flowing out of the INFINITE GOODNESS OF THE DIVINE NATURE. To know what this is, I turn to all his works, and to his revealed will.

as I might many more, to ſhew, that the objection I am refuting, is built on no certain foundation; and that in the fair application of it, it muſt overthrow many articles of faith in which we are all well agreed, and bring into confuſion the *limitarian* ſcheme as well as any other adopted by chriſtians.

But it is plain, at firſt view, that, if innumerable of the offspring of God, rational creatures which he hath called into being, or even any number of them, are in extreme ſufferings to endleſs duration, in that caſe, they muſt be infinite loſers by that exiſtence, which the God of love forced upon them. Yet even on this ſuppoſition we might not impeach the *juſtice* and righteouſneſs of the abſolute, ſovereign Proprietor of all things. But, I would aſk my reader, is this your idea of the true character of the God of love, God who is love, even in the abſtract; or of Chriſt, who ſo loved the world, that he gave himſelf a ranſom for all?

It may here be added. On the *limitarian* plan, they who are ſaved will be ſaved by their own works, being juſtified by their own works, in Paul's ſenſe of juſtification by works, or in any other poſſible ſenſe in which we can conceive of any ſuch juſtification. Yea, *they are ſaved by their own merit, ſo far as we can have any notion of merit in a creature.*

All the idea we can poſſibly have of merit in creatures, or claim on the Deity by

any good works, is the following: That there is something good in the creature, which God considers as a condition of his salvation; and which in the order of nature, precedes his security of eternal life. The question is not, whether we are wholly dependent on the free grace of God for all this good in us, and all these conditions and terms of justification and salvation? We all agree, that every creature is absolutely and entirely dependent on God, for all good of every kind, both inherent and external. If we consider any good in us, whether faith, repentance, holiness, or any thing else, as a term or condition, previous to which, *as a condition in God's view*, he hath not made eternal life sure to us; we arrogate to ourselves all the claim of merit that can possibly enter into the proud heart of a sinner, and all that Paul so much oppoſeth; we claim to ourselves every thing that man can possibly boast of, unless we claim entire independency of God, which no man ever pretended to.

To say we have, indeed, certain good qualifications, and certain good distinctions, *through grace*, which give us claim to salvation; is to say all that the proud pharisees ever did say, and all that the proudest man on earth ever did, or can say; even though we are ever so ready to own, that God freely gave us all these good qualifications and distinctions. But the feelings of a soul are exceedingly different, who considers salvation made sure to him, by God in Christ, under

the idea of a moſt ungodly wretch, and without any diſtinction of good in him more than in any man on earth, or any fallen angel in hell; that God juſtified him in Chriſt as *ungodly*, wholly ſo, and then ſent him all the diſtinctions, all the qualifications of repentance, faith, &c. merely in a way of application of that ſalvation which, with God, was made ſure to him before the world began.

It is certain we can form no other idea of ſalvation by works, or merit in a creature, than this, viz. That God, by his own free grace, hath made ſome good and valuable diſtinctions in that creature, hath freely beſtowed ſome good qualifications, making that creature better than ſome others; and then that God on that conſideration, beſtows eternal life; and that the good he hath already beſtowed is a condition that binds him ſo to do.

Every one who thinks he has got hold of a diſtinguiſhing, or ſpecial promiſe made under a condition, will readily acknowledge that it was wholly owing to the grace of God, that ever he come up to the condition. Faith, repentance, holineſs, and all thoſe things that are called terms and conditions of ſalvation, are wholly of the free grace of God, as we all grant. Yet, all theſe are good works in the creature; yea, the chief, the capital of good works. Now, to ſay that we may plead our title to ſalvation, as grounded on any of theſe, or all theſe, is only to offer the plaineſt and greateſt plea of

merit in us, or of our own works, that any man ever did offer or rely upon. To own we had our qualifications, which we plead as conditions of the promiſes, from God, only in a way of mere grace, does not militate in the leaſt againſt all the pride and confidence of our own merit; but does rather enhance it, as I have ſhewn before. The more diſtinguiſhing notice we imagine God has taken of us, to make us better than other men, the more we ſhall feel like the phariſee in the temple. Indeed there is no ſalvation, on the *limitarian* plan; but the ſame that was ſo pleaſing to that devout phariſee.

BUT, on the GOSPEL PLAN, the idea, and the feelings of the heart are quite different. Chriſt alone is our ſecurity for eternal life, wholly diſtinct from all conditions or qualifications *in us*. Our hope is laid up in heaven. Jeſus Chriſt is our life. He hath taken away the ſin of the world, even before we knew any thing about it: And now, by his holy ſpirit, ſends to us the means of ſalvation, and makes them operate effectually on our ſouls, to make us meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the ſaints in light. He firſt inſures ſalvation, and then makes the application of the benefit, in his own way; which is the only reaſonable and proper way, the only way adapted to the rational natures he has given us. God looks on no terms, no conditions in poor ſinners, however believing and penitent they are; nor on their inward holineſs, otherwiſe than

as fit gradations he himself is taking, to apply to them that eternal salvation which, *with him*, was equally sure to them in their very worst estate. "If while we were enemies we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son: Much more, being reconciled, we shall be saved by his life." Rom. v. 10. He that gave himself a ransom for all, will take his own way and time to make the application; but the day shall come when without a single exception, "the ransomed of the Lord shall return and come with songs to Zion, and everlasting joy shall be upon their heads; they shall obtain joy and gladness, and sorrow and mourning shall flee away."

It is a certain truth, that good qualifications and valuable distinctions, conferred by a sovereign God on his rational creatures, will always operate in a way of pride and haughtiness, if they consider these as terms and conditions obliging God to confer great things on them in future; how much soever they may acknowledge free grace in all these excellent endowments. It is equally certain, that all these graces will operate in a way of meekness and humility, if considered only as God's fit and proper means, or gradations to confer benefits, founded on Christ as the only condition, and his atonement as the only foundation to make them sure. Thus, although there will be great distinctions of grace and glory in heaven to all eternity, among the redeemed race, they who have

moſt glory there, will excel others as much in the grace of heavenly meekneſs, as in any thing elſe. They will caſt down the brighteſt crowns; and in doing this, will bow, with the moſt lowly reverence, before the throne of the great and glorious Sovereign of all.

It may not be amiſs here to reſume a thought before ſuggeſted, with ſome addition. I have ſaid that, on the *limitarian* plan of ſalvation, the old covenant with Adam, and the new covenant in the goſpel are entirely one and the ſame, in every thing eſſential or material; the difference is only in words, not in reality.

Are we, under the goſpel, wholly dependent on God for every good qualification? So was Adam before the fall. Was real goodneſs, holineſs, or virtue required of him as a previous condition of eternal life? The ſame things, in kind, are required of us on the *limitarian plan* in the ſame view, only not in ſo high a degree: For an *holy heart* is at the bottom of all the conditional accompliſhments they plead for, as making out our claim, in the ſight of God, to his eternal favor. Did God ſay to Adam you ſhall produce or ſhew your qualifications in heart and life, or elſe there is no foundation of hope from the conſtitution you are under? Juſt ſo the *limitarian* preacher ſays to us under the goſpel. So in all other reſpects, the old and new conſtitutions are, *in their nature, ſubſtantially* the ſame.

But, there is one difference to be taken

notice of, which makes the new covenant much more difficult to obtain eternal life by, than the old. It is this ; the terms and conditions God required of Adam were ſuch, as, at the time they were made, Adam had both natural and moral power to comply with : Whereas we now have only the natural power, but no moral power within our ſouls. Though moral impotency is very far from excuſing us from guilt ; yet, nevertheleſs, this ſhews us that they who now hear the goſpel, are, on *limitarian* principles, in a far more perilous condition than man was, when placed under the firſt covenant ; or that Jeſus Chriſt preached in all his infinite fulneſs, is not ſo good a foundation to rely upon, as the covenant of works was. And is this the account God hath given us of the foundation he hath laid in Zion ? You may anſwer and ſay, Chriſt hath undertaken and engaged for ſinners, to work all things in and for them. This is indeed a GLORIOUS TRUTH. Yet upon the *limitarian ſcheme*, are not the great multitude of mankind left out of this engagement, and under an eternal decree of reprobation too ? And not every one of them commanded to believe and repent and become a new creature, and that upon pain of damnation moſt dreadfully aggravated ? And is this good news to all people ? Is this goſpel, or good news to every creature under heaven ? Is not this ground of hope to a loſt world, much more perilous, than to man under the firſt covenant, which yet ſaved him, not from total ruin ?

I MUST freely confeſs, that, after a very long and very critical conſideration of this matter, I cannot ſee but that, if any obtain eternal life on the *limitarian plan*, they do it eſſentially in the ſame way, in which Adam was to make it ſure by the firſt covenant, i. e. by their own qualifications. Theſe are no more of free grace than his muſt have been. Nor can I ſee, but that the foundation of hope laid in Chriſt for man, ſince the fall, is far more perilous than his ground of hope by the firſt covenant: But, bleſſed be God, Jeſus Chriſt is preached in the TRUE GOSPEL, as a ſure foundation and fountain of life to *every* guilty ſinner, and to all alike; and every ſinner is alike commanded to believe on him. "This is a faithful ſaying and worthy of all acceptation (the acceptation of all ſinners without a ſingle exception) that Jeſus Chriſt came into the world to ſave ſinners; of whom I am chief." 1. Tim. i. 15. And, I never yet could pray or preach according to the goſpel, to ſatisfy my own conſcience, without ſaying thoſe things which, by *unavoidable conſequence*, do plainly infer, that God will have all men to be ſaved in the end; and that Chriſt is the Savior of all men, in the *full, direct and moſt natural meaning of the words*; though he is eſpecially ſo to thoſe who now believe, as I have before noticed. Nor, did I ever yet hear an evangelical ſermon from any man, or a devout prayer, without premiſes from which the ſame conſequence is inevitable.

I AM very ſenſible that it has been com-

mon for great and good preachers to mix much of the old and new covenant together; though they never yet could make them unite in one. So far as the new covenant has been attended to with clearneſs, as *pure goſpel*, they have always ſaid thoſe things which cannot poſſibly be true; unleſs, Chriſt hath given his life a ranſom for all; and died for the ſins of the whole world; and will have all men to be ſaved; and will draw all men unto him, in the *plain, ſimple ſenſe* of language, without any comment at all. Every ſentence and exhibition of pure goſpel, from the firſt to the laſt page in the book of God, does fully announce or imply the ſame; though the deſert of man, on the covenant of works, is all along kept in our view, with all the dreadful thunders of a broken law, and the tremendous wrath of Deity againſt ſin every where diſplayed as a flaming fire. The goſpel and the law over againſt each other, even as in their ancient types, mount *Gerizim* and mount *Ebal*.

It is my very humble, though very firm concluſion, after all poſſible attention to the nature of things, and to the word of God, that whatſoever miſerable ſinner of the human kind is diſpoſed to collect the leaſt ray of hope from any diſtinctions, or qualifications in his heart, or in his life, however he may come by them, to embolden him to depend on eternal life, as promiſed in *conſequence* of theſe things; but not *inſured* in the Mediator previous to all, or any of theſe qualifications, and that moſt abſolutely in the

covenant of redemption; that man, I say, does still virtually desire to be under the law. And he shall hear the law too, until the spirit of God shall be pleased to furnish him with a more honorable sense of the true God, and Jesus Christ whom he hath sent; and more exalted views of the glory of JEHOVAH, in the manifestations of infinite, eternal, self-moved love, and in his displays of sovereign mercy to a lost world.

I WOULD now resume and illustrate a thought which I have before introduced. It is a common thing among men, that a man is condemned in one character, and justified in another, even the same man. A judge may be likewise general of an army. He may appear exceeding well in one of these characters, and very bad in the other. He may be justly damned or condemned as a general, having ruined his country in his military character; and yet be much approved or justified as a civilian. He may be justly amerced to the amount of ten times the value of his estate, and cast into prison for life; yet be wholly justified in the latter character. A sponsor may step in and redeem him, and he may after that enjoy the blessings of his good character; although his bad one will remain forever condemned, and not the less so because he is redeemed from the penalty of it.

No fair, candid reader will cavil at this simile, because it does not *quadrate* in all respects: Since it does intirely in the point designed to be illustrated by it, which is, that

we may be forever condemned in one character; yet justified in another, and also may be delivered from all the pains and penalties justly due to our condemned character and conduct. To say that both characters in this similitude are personal; whereas, in the way of our salvation, *one* is only imputative, is nothing at all to the purpose. For the imputed character is, in the account of our great Judge, and by the covenant of redemption, just the same as to our redemption from the pains of hell, and our title to heaven, as if it were personal.

THE common sense and practice of mankind, in many cases in common life, approves of the condemnation and justification of the same persons, in different relations and connections; and of the indemnity of men most justly condemned, in a real character, which they have personally sustained. And though men cannot be happy and miserable at the same time; yet they may be happy, in their persons and real enjoyments, while forever conscious they have merited nothing but sorrow and woe.

IT is further an evidence of true gospel faith and hope; that they work by love, and purify the heart and life. Faith operates in a way of love to God and man; "and every man that hath this hope in him purifieth himself even as HE is pure."

I HAVE already observed, that the faith and hope for which I am pleading, always have such an effect, and, in the very nature

of things, always will, while men and moral agents remain what God has made them. Alſo my own experience does indeed witneſs to this truth. I ſuppoſe that my own ſoul is formed on the general, the univerſal plan of human nature: And I am certain that ſuch a view of God and the way of ſalvation as I am pleading for; ſuch a view of man, and of all creatures, and of their entire, abſolute, and everlaſting dependence on God; ſuch a ſenſe of the guilt and miſery of man by nature, and the exalted glory of Chriſt, and of infinite, free, and ſovereign grace, has, of all things, the moſt powerful effect on my own heart to lead to repentance, odium of all ſin, the mortification of every inordinate deſire, and every worldly luſt, joyful reſignation to the will of God in all things, in all afflictions, however painful to nature, and to make me feel towards God and all his creatures, in imitation of the feelings of the bleſſed Redeemer. I am certain that if I have, in any degree, the ſame mind which was alſo in Chriſt Jeſus, I have it in this way. When I have the deepeſt ſenſe of theſe things, the world and creatures appear to me as nothing, yea, leſs than nothing and vanity, and God all in all. Therefore, if other human ſouls are like mine, I have not the leaſt fear that underſtanding the way of ſalvation as I do, will do any harm to any child of Adam; but quite the reverſe.

I CANNOT contract my views of the great ſalvation, the *common ſalvation*, within nar-

rower limits, without limiting the Holy One of Iſrael, even as to the capital glory of all his ways. Yet after all, I am happy in this, that if my dear kindred of the human kind, or many of them cannot, at preſent, extend their faith beyond the *narrow* bounds of the *limitarian plan*; yet they are ſtill in the ſure way to eternal ſalvation, if they fall not ſhort of their own underſtanding of the way of life; that is to ſay, if they have that repentance, *faith*, and holineſs which they hold neceſſary; which is exactly the ſame as that which I maintain neceſſary, and in a way of free grace only. I well know that every man is *at preſent*, in the way that leadeth to deſtruction, who hath not theſe graces. If many ſuppoſe, that the great Mediator hath never engaged, in his own way and time, to give theſe graces, except to a few of the human kind; let them ſee to it that they be found among thoſe few. If they do this, they ſhall never fail.

THEIR faith falls ſhort in no eſſential point: Their unhappineſs lies only in this, that they do not draw all the bleſſed conſequences and comforts they might draw, from premiſes truly evangelical and ſaving. The premiſes are not unſafe, as far as they go. If inwrought into the ſoul, they ſhall lead to ſafety. We ought, however, to ſatisfy ourſelves in the inquiry, WHAT IS TRUTH? Yet it is not our believing, or not believing, that there

are many or few who ſhall arrive at glory, which will ſave or ruin any of us. Believing the great, eſſential doctrines of grace, and living agreeably to the power of them; believing on the Lord Jeſus Chriſt to the ſaving of our ſouls, and following him in the regeneration, whether that work be done for us ſooner or later, theſe, as God's means, will end in glory. No man ſhall ſee the Lord in glory, without *holineſs*, and that in a far more perfect degree than ever any man had in this world ſince the fall, or ever will have while breath remains, or the ſoul is in union with this mortal body. Moſt bleſſed however, are thoſe elect of God, choſen in Chriſt to early converſion, piety, and holineſs, and to a life of faith, godlineſs, and divine pleaſure all their days.

Let thoſe who believe, that, in the moſt *plain* and *literal ſenſe*, Chriſt is God's ſalvation to the ends of the earth: That as ſin hath reigned unto death, *much more*, ſhall grace reign through righteouſneſs to eternal life, by Jeſus Chriſt our Lord: And that as, by one man, judgment came upon all men unto condemnation; ſo, by the righteouſneſs of one, the free gift came upon all men unto juſtification of life: I ſay, let all ſuch ſee to it, without delay, that they become new creatures. Such ſhould be immediately reconciled to that God, in the actual temper of their ſouls, who is *truly reconciled* to them, in the covenant of redemption, and the atonement

of his dear Son; and they ſhould walk worthy of him, who hath called them to his kingdom and glory. For, in very deed, there is the ſame neceſſity of all this, in order that we may be happy in the world to come, on the doctrine here advanced, as on any limited plan of ſalvation, that ever entered into the minds of any of the loſt human race.

THE great buſineſs of the preachers of righteouſneſs is little concerned, in telling, *how many ſhall be ſaved;* but rather, how guilty, miſerable ſouls ſhall be ſaved. They are to hold up to the view of all men, the true character of JEHOVAH, and of fallen man: And the relation in which man ſtands to his Maker and his Judge, his Redeemer, and the Sanctifier of the polluted human ſoul: What Chriſt hath done to lay the ſole foundation of all his hopes: What muſt be done on his ſoul to bring him to the fruition of that bleſſedneſs which alone can happify his immortal ſoul: What man muſt be and do, as indiſpenſably neceſſary, in its due place, to give him true comfort in this world, and introduce him to the inheritance and enjoyment of a kingdom prepared for the elect body of Chriſt, and, with God, made abſolutely ſure to that whole body, before the world began: And to point out and inforce all relative duties, and every moral virtue, agreeably to the reaſon and nature of things, and the word of God.

They are alſo to ſhew the horrible nature of all ſin, vice, and immorality; that it is even death, hell, and damnation, ſo long as the ſoul continues impenitent in the ways of it. They are to diſſuade from it, by every goſpel motive, and by every motive from God's pure, holy, and infinitely amiable law. They are to give hope and relief to the ſinking, deſpairing ſoul, *in Chriſt alone*, and comfort to the children of God in *him only:* To lead in the holy and joyful ſolemnities of divine worſhip, in the high praiſes of God and the Lamb: To preach the *unſearchable riches of Chriſt:* And to manifeſt their ſolemn ſenſe of all theſe things, by a pure and holy life and example. Yet when preſſed with arguments againſt that glorious, divine revelation God hath made to a loſt world, which never can be fully and fairly anſwered on any more limited plan, I think it a duty, and highly expedient to take refuge in that *very goſpel* which, for ages and generations, has lain in great part, hidden from men, in all the extent and glory of it. In which all the infinite honors of Deity are ſecured, and alſo the final recovery of a loſt world. Thus, they are to open the word of God as fully as poſſible in that true ſenſe, againſt which there can lie no ſolid charge of inconſiſtency. Thus it will forever appear in the utmoſt divine beauty, and in glorious harmony, from beginning to end.

Could I poſſibly conceive of any way,

in which the great and holy God might be more glorified in the eternal *perſonal* damnation of many, or moſt of mankind, than in extending final redemption to them all; I certainly ought to acquieſce in ſuch a fearful event, yea, even to wiſh for it. But as it really appears to me, from the nature of God, from his word, and from all his works, and above all, from the character, atonement and commiſſion of his dear Son, and from the covenant of redemption and of grace, that the moſt high and holy God cannot leave one human ſoul forever, under the power of ſpiritual and eternal death, conſiſtent with his own higheſt declarative honor, and glory; I ought not, I cannot believe he ever will.

My reaſon is weak, very weak indeed; yet it is my duty to keep cloſe to the dictates of it, under the all-ſacred authority of divine revelation. I cannot poſſibly ſee, but that, in the eternal, perſonal damnation of one human ſoul, the Moſt High would caſt a great reflection on the full and complete atonement of the Son of his love, and alſo on the Father himſelf, as the Son is the brightneſs of his Father's glory, and the expreſs image of his perſon. The diſhonorable reflection appears to me would conſiſt in this; it would fully imply and indicate, either, that the atonement of Chriſt was not infinite, nor his power and faithfulneſs; or that the love, pity, mercy, and grace of

God, was not infinite; or that the ſatiſfaction of Chriſt could not be adequate to the divine law.

To imagine there is any need of the *eternal perſonal torment* of any ſinner of the human race, in order further to illuſtrate the holineſs and juſtice of God, the infinite evil of ſin; or further to impreſs the minds of the intelligent ſyſtem with a ſenſe of the infinite odiouſneſs of ſin, and the infinite purity of God, and his infinite hatred of all ſin, is plainly to ſuppoſe that the great work of the Son of God can admit of ſome amendment; that in very deed it is not a finiſhed work. For any man to think this neceſſary or expedient, or any ſuch thing, is an amazing reflection on him who ſaid "IT IS FINISHED," when he bowed his head and gave up the ghoſt. It is infinitely more abſurd than it would be for a nobleman, whoſe galleries are adorned with the inimitable performances of a *Raphael* or a *Titian*, afterwards to employ the moſt contemptible of all painters, to come and retouch them, in order to their greater embelliſhment! *God is a rock, his work is perfect.* The work of redemption is moſt emphatically ſo. Of all that pertains to this work, muſt it be ſaid, "Whatſoever God doth, it ſhall be forever: Nothing can be put to it, nor any thing taken from it; and God doth it that man ſhould fear before him."

IN good truth, I can learn nothing from

the nature, character, word, or works of God; nothing from the emanations he has been pleaſed to make of himſelf, that leads me to a ſingle idea that the moſt holy God, ſince what hath been done and ſuffered by the Son of his love, can derive any glory to himſelf, or communicate any inſtruction, any good to the intelligent ſyſtem, from the eternal, perſonal damnation of any poor, miſerable, guilty ſinner of the human kind; or that ſuch a thing can be without manifeſt oppoſition to the bleſſed nature of God, who is infinite love, and to the glorious and merciful covenant of redemption, and all the moſt glorious and tremendous work of the Son of God, which he finiſhed on the croſs. I cannot ſee, but that the nature of God is now open, (if I may ſo ſpeak) the nature of eternal, infinite, unlimited, boundleſs love, is now free to take its ſpontaneous courſe, without the leaſt obſtacle, from any oppoſing claims of juſtice, ſtanding in the way of the final ſalvation of a whole guilty world. If it be ſo, do we in any wiſe, diſpleaſe God in aſcribing ſuch "ſalvation to our God who ſitteth upon the throne, and to the Lamb? Saying, Amen: Bleſſing, and glory, and wiſdom, and thankſgiving, and honor, and power, and might, be unto our God forever and ever. Amen." Rev. vii.

I AM conſtrained to think, that it is this very plan of redeeming wiſdom, power, and love, that the four and twenty elders, the repreſentatives of all the redeemed on high,

hold in rapturous contemplation; and alſo all the bleſſed in heaven, when they fall down before him that ſitteth on the throne, and worſhip him that liveth forever and ever, and caſt their crowns before the throne, ſaying, thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive glory, and honor, and power: for thou haſt created all things, and for thy pleaſure they are and were created." *Thy pleaſure*, moſt emphatically, as all things were made for, and reſult in the glories of redeeming love. Rev. iv. Nor can I, on any *limitarian plan*, or on any in the univerſe, but that I am pleading for, account for that glorious diſplay. Rev. v. "And I beheld, and I heard the voice of many angels round about the throne, and the living creatures,* and the elders; and the number of them was ten thouſand times ten thouſand, and thouſands of thouſands; ſaying, with a loud voice, worthy is the Lamb that was ſlain, to receive power, and riches, and wiſdom, and ſtrength, and honor, and glory, and bleſſing. And every creature which is in heaven, and on the earth, and under the earth, and ſuch as are in the ſea, and all that are in them, heard I, ſaying, bleſſing, and honor, and glory, and power, be unto him that ſitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb forever and ever. And the four living creatures ſaid, Amen. And the four and

* Ζωα.

twenty elders fell down, and worſhipped him that liveth forever and ever."

If we attend only to the voice of the holy law of God, as it ſounds every where through the bible, we muſt forever deſpair, not only of the ſalvation of this loſt *world*, but of any *one* of the fallen race; unleſs we conſider this law, in all its maledictions, and in all its holy demands, *wholly* ſatisfied in the ſecond man, the Lord from heaven. This indeed, is pure goſpel truth. When we ſo conſider it, the door of ſalvation is wide open for all, and open alike for every child of Adam. The whole debt is paid, and why ſhould not all the priſoners be diſcharged? Chriſt paid it not for himſelf, but for them, and that according to divine ſtipulation, and the entire good pleaſure of the Father. "Meſſiah ſhall be cut off, but not for himſelf."

He has as much power and love, as he has of merit; and his *kingly* and *prophetical* abilities are equal to his *prieſtly*. All power is given to him, in heaven and in earth. Shall the infinite love, that brought him to the croſs to die for the ſins of the whole world, ſtop at the croſs? Will he not make the application, finally, as extenſive as the merits of the purchaſe? If not, it cannot be for want of power, it muſt be only for want of will and merciful diſpoſition of ſoul. Is it any honor

to Chriſt, that we reſtrain the bowels of his love in our own minds? Or is it agreeable to his word? Ye are not ſtraitened in him; but ye are ſtraitened in your own bowels. Certainly we ſhould more honor and pleaſe God, and the Son of his love, if we had not ſuch narrow, limited thoughts of DIVINE LOVE.

YOU, my reader, know, in your own ſoul, that you ſincerely and cordially love your neighbor, and daily give him every poſſible proof of it; yet he ſo hates you, that he cannot, he will not believe that you love him, and is ever complaining of you as the moſt bitter, cruel enemy he has in the world. Does he not abuſe and diſhonor you? But what proof did you ever give to any man on earth, that you loved him and wiſhed well to him, in any meaſure comparable to the teſtimonies of love, mercy, pity, and real good will which the Redeemer does daily produce, to prove his real, wonderful love, mercy, and pity toward every child of Adam? He beſtows more real kindneſs on the vileſt ſinner in the world, in one day, than ever you beſtowed on any perſon on earth, in your whole life.

AFTER all this, for us to ſay, that it is his will and diſpoſition to damn moſt of mankind in perſon, to all eternity, appears to me not honorable to the true character of Chriſt, or agreeable to his word. To ſay, he is willing to ſave every ſinner, that he taketh no pleaſure in the death of him

that dieth, but that he would turn and live; and yet that God Almighty will not ſee that effected in his own way and time, in which he ſo much delights, and *that*, after every obſtacle is removed by his Son, which ever ſtood in the way of man's ſalvation, I think, is very far from doing honor to the character of the living and true God. Our heavenly Father would have us argue his love, and that of his Son towards unworthy ſinners, from all the manifeſtations of love, kindneſs and mercy he hath made to them, in all the paths of his providence, and, above all, in the wonders of redeeming love. It is our great blame that we do not know that the goodneſs of God leadeth to repentance, and that repentance takes hold of a ſenſe of pardon and eternal life.

For my own part, I feel afraid to ſpeak, or even think of my heavenly Father, in the *limitarian* view of him; leſt I ſhould awfully abuſe that character which claims my higheſt reverence and love. If my own children will think and ſay, that, *for my own pleaſure*, I will make them as miſerable as I can, after all the fruits of kindneſs in my power, which I have conferred upon them with an unremitting hand; I ſhould think them very wicked, a ſhame to their father, and bitterneſs to her that bare them. Why ſhould we imagine, that our heavenly Father is pleaſed to have us entertain ſimilar thoughts of him? "If ye then being evil, know how to give good

gifts unto your children, how much more ſhall your Father who is in heaven, give good things to them that aſk him ?" Matt. vii. 11.

The work of Chriſt is a *finiſhed work*. The covenant of redemption is fulfilled on his part, *in every iota of it*.

The blood of Jeſus Chriſt cleanſeth from *all* ſin, from *impenitence*, *hardneſs of heart*, and *blindneſs of mind*, as well as practical ſins. Indeed, if it did not, it could cleanſe from no ſin at all: For *theſe* are the fountain of all other ſins and the greateſt of all. All ſins are alike forgiven to men, and done away in the atonement; and regeneration, repentance and faith, are communicated on the ſame ground, and their office is to make us "*know the things freely given us of God.*" God ſent his beloved Son into the world, that the world, through him might be ſaved; and he "taſted death for *every man.*" The prophet foreſaw this, and he ſpeaks of the bleſſed conſequence, without a word or thought of limitation. He conſiders a loſt world all alike priſoners of juſtice, and caſt into one and the ſame doleful pit together; yet proclaims aloud, "By the blood of thy covenant, I have ſent forth thy priſoners out of the pit wherein is no water" Zech. ix. 11. Nor had Iſaiah any thought of limitation, when he ſpeaks of the anointing of the Son of God, "to proclaim liberty to the captives, and the opening of the priſon to them that are bound; to comfort ALL that mourn."

Iſai. lxi. "That thou mayeſt ſay to the priſoners, go forth; and to them that are in darkneſs, ſhew yourſelves." Iſai. xlix. 9. And it is worthy of our notice, that when the Savior was commenting on theſe paſſages, he immediately took occaſion to open the extent of his ſalvation to the audience. Luke iv. This was as much to their ſurpriſe and offence, as the moſt extenſive doctrine of the ſalvation of ſinners now is to the moſt tenacious retainer of the doctrine of a *partial ſalvation.*

As I have already hinted, whatever doctrinal perſuaſion may be in the mind of any unregenerate man, that the way of ſalvation, and the extent of it, according to the nature and word of God, is ſuch as I maintain, this doctrine will never quiet an alarming, polluted conſcience, and ſet the ſoul at reſt from awful fears and terrors; until it is acquainted with God and *reconciled* to him.

While total enmity to God remains in the ſoul, there will be diſtreſſing fears in ſeaſons of reflection. Nor is it poſſible in the nature of things, that creatures that hate God as we do, in our natural ſtate, ſhould have that exalted ſenſe of his love, which is manifeſted in the goſpel, and is indeed the glory of it. Blind, unrenewed ſinners will meaſure the love of God, and the motives on which they ſuppoſe God acts, much by their own.

We muſt indeed know the living and true God, and Jeſus Chriſt whom he hath ſent, in order to have a feeling apprehenſion of

our eternal life, as manifeſt in the goſpel; whether we have a more confined, or a more extenſive underſtanding of it. *Never can we have comfort in the reconciliation of a friend, to us; until our hearts meet with him in that reconciliation.* If our enmity remains, it will exclude us from comfort in his friendſhip. How important then is an immediate reconciliation to God, by a new creation in Chriſt Jeſus, and by repentance and faith in his blood!

The infinite importance of immediate reconciliation to God, is even more forcibly urged on the doctrine I have advanced, than on any more limited principles. The great apoſtle Paul hath in a few words, virtually ſaid all I have been pleading for; and from premiſes ariſing from the moſt extenſive view of the atonement of Chriſt, he does moſt forcibly inculcate the immediate reconciliation of ſinners to God. "For the love of Chriſt conſtraineth us, becauſe we thus judge, that if *one* died for *all*, then were all dead; and that he died for *all*, that they which live, ſhould not henceforth live unto themſelves, but unto him who died for them, and roſe again. And all things are of God, who hath reconciled us to himſelf by Jeſus Chriſt, and hath given to us the miniſtry of reconciliation; to wit, that God was in Chriſt reconciling *the world* unto himſelf, not imputing their treſpaſſes unto them; and hath commited

unto us the word of reconciliation. Now then we are ambaſſadors for Chriſt, as though God did beſeech you by us: We pray you in Chriſt's ſtead, be ye reconciled to God. For he hath made him to be ſin for us, who knew no ſin; that we might be made the righteouſneſs of God in him." 2. Cor. v.

ALTHOUGH this apoſtle did alſo preach the law abundantly, and ſound the voice of pure juſtice in all its tremendous terrors; yet he never preached or wrote one word inconſiſtent with what I have juſt quoted. Whenever in his preaching or writing, he held up the goſpel to view, it was of the ſame tenor. The ſame may be ſaid of all the other apoſtles, and of all the prophets. They learned it from Jeſus Chriſt himſelf, in whom the only foundation was laid, and who announced the ſame glorious tidings.

AND, truly, as I have before hinted, I never read or heard any diſcourſes of eminent and pious proteſtant divines, but what were built on premiſes and arguments which fully infer that glorious, final extent of ſalvation, which I maintain, however inconſiſtent they may have been, in ſome parts of their writings or ſermons. Indeed, all I have now written, is nothing more or leſs than the common, genuine, proteſtant doctrine of grace, ſet free from all the contradictions and inconſiſtencies that have ſo long been intermixed with it, and the genuine and glorious conſe-

quences of it more openly and explicitly displayed. And thus I read those writings still, and ever shall, with great edification and pleasure. And the inconsistencies I find intermixed with such pure and glorious truths, give me no more offence, than the bones I find in delicious fish or fowl at my table.

To close the whole, as a consistent IMPROVEMENT of this doctrine of salvation.

HOW should we love, fear, adore, and obey such a God, whose nature and character is such as here exhibited to our view! How ought we to submit to him in all things, and rejoice in him evermore! What a foundation is here laid for the relief of the most guilty, even the chief of sinners! What high and honorable thoughts of God should we ever entertain, and what should we think of Christ his Son! What comfort and even joy does this doctrine afford us in all scenes of divine providence, in the whole government of such a God!

HENCE how are we taught to love one another, to love, pity and pray for all our fellow sinners! How will the firm belief of this doctrine lead us to prize the word and ordinances of God, and to delight in his worship, and to call on all creatures to praise the Lord, whose mercy endureth forever, and to hate all sin, all that is opposite to the nature and com-

mands of ſuch a God! How will theſe principles, if really in the heart, produce a feeling ſenſe that all ſin, vice and immorality, is no other than death, hell, and damnation; and that holineſs and virtue is heaven and divine glory! How will they lead us to live religion, for the love and pleaſure of it; and to mourn for, and ſhun all diſobedience to God, all moral evil as hateful beyond all expreſſion, in its own nature, and as that which coſt our beſt Friend, our bleſſed Redeemer ſo dear! How will theſe truths, if really believed and wrought into the ſoul, promote love, union, and harmony among all the miniſters of Chriſt, and every branch of his church redeemed by his own blood, of *whatever denomination they are!*

THESE principles cannot make thoſe who do not believe them, either worſe or better: For they can have no effect upon them. And as for all thoſe who do really *in their hearts* believe in this ſalvation, I am certain the effect will be very great and good. Their hearts will be enlarged, and they will run in the way of God's commandments. Our miſery conſiſts very much in the want of high and honorable thoughts of God and of Chriſt. And we fall ſhort in nothing more than in our ideas of the divine love. There is not a miſerable ſinner on earth, and never was, who would not truſt in God, if he had a knowledge of his true character. "They

that know thy name will put their truſt in thee." Pſal. ix. 10. But all that know not God, are in a ſtate of condemnation. There never can be any danger of our having too exalted and enlarged thoughts of any of the attributes of God, no not of his love: For GOD IS LOVE. And to keep ourſelves in the love of God, in all the infinite extent of it, can never bring us into condemnation.

YOU, my dear reader, as well as the writer, muſt ſoon die, and appear at the awful bar of an omniſcient and holy Judge. We muſt ſoon make trial of the foundation of the hope upon which we build. Our diſtinctions from other loſt ſinners, will probably be no greater then, than at this very moment; and where ſhall we look for ſupport then? To things within ourſelves, or to Jeſus Chriſt? To our good qualifications, or to God alone? *Will you, my friend, venture into the eternal world with any hope, or any mixture of hope, but what is built on* JEHOVAH *alone, as manifeſt in his beloved Son?*

WHATEVER men may plead, in days of health, in favor of marks and diſtinctions *in themſelves*, to feed their vanity, or ſupport their hope; I never yet diſcourſed with any dying man in the exerciſe of his rational powers, who did not entirely ſet at nought every ſuch ground of hope. I have invariably found every one who felt within his ſoul in that awful, trying hour,

any hope at all, has fixed it wholly on the glorious nature and attributes of God, as displayed in the great Redeemer. And whatever our *refuge* may be now, you and I, my dear friend, must make *this* our last refuge. Death is too terrible, and the tribunal of the great Judge too awful, to admit of any confidence but in Christ alone.

We shall not feel ourselves so much better than others, when death and the judgment stare us in the face, as we are apt to do, in days of worldly prosperity and pleasure. Whatever we imagine now, we shall then be fully convinced that a sole, unmixed dependence on God in Christ can alone support our trembling souls; and that every other refuge is but a refuge of lies. We shall then find our need of Christ for wisdom, righteousness, sanctification, and compleat redemption in every view, and in every part of it, for Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the ending, the first and the last. God, in his Son, will be all in all. And in that trying hour, we shall all find, that it is our sole refuge and only consolation, that, OF HIM, AND THROUGH HIM, AND TO HIM ARE ALL THINGS, TO WHOM BE GLORY FOREVER.

AMEN.